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FROM BEGINNING
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GREAT BRITAIN AND SOUTH AFRICA.*

In our last number we discussed in a hopeful spirit the benefits that might accrue to the world from the Peace Conference at the Hague. It had not then concluded its labors in the cause of peace; and now, within less than three months' time, we find the British Empire—surely not the least genuinely peace-loving of the great nations of the earth—embarking on the largest military undertaking she has known since the Crimean war. It would be easy to be cynical over such a spectacle; it is impossible not to be sad!

For many years past the state of South Africa has been one of unrest. The situation has, in truth, been full of difficulty. There existed elements of discord known to us all; and statesmen in Africa and at home have at least had ample warning that only the wisest and most prudent guidance could reconcile the jealousy and the jarrings of racial antagonism and save South Africa from the overwhelming disaster of a racial war. The Convention of 1884 was concluded by Lord Derby and President Kruger, while the Transvaal was still a remote and pastoral State; and neither, could he have

foreseen the changes almost immediately afterwards produced by the discovery of gold, would have used the language that he did in negotiating that Convention, or indeed have supposed that such an arrangement was suited to the requirements of the case. In April 1896, in July 1897, and in January 1898 we invited the attention of our readers to the history and existing condition of affairs in South Africa, and we have no intention now to go back upon the past. We deplored then, and we have more than ever reason to deplore now, the incalculable injury done to South Africa and the Empire by the Jameson Raid. The Boers are among the most suspicious of mankind; and when it appeared that the Raid was no madcap freak of a party of adventurers, but was part of a conspiracy long and deeply planned by the Prime Minister of Cape Colony—a man held in high honor by so many of his countrymen at home—it is small wonder if a distrust was created in British professions and in British good faith which it has been almost impossible to remove.

It is admitted on all hands that the system of government prevailing in the Republic could not go on unchanged. The Boers have their virtues as well as their faults, but they are utterly unfit

* Correspondence with Reference to the Political Affairs of the South African Republic, presented to Parliament. 1890.

to govern an enterprising foreign community, such as has grown up round the gold fields. They or their ancestors had fought for and won their independence when they were the sole white inhabitants of the country. Now they are only a minority of the people; and it was not likely that an oligarchy of Dutch farmers would prove equal to the duty of governing the energetic, industrial, go-ahead foreign population which had come to push its fortune in the Transvaal. On the other hand it was equally unlikely that the Boers would, without a good deal of pressure, surrender a large part of their authority into the hands of foreigners. The outlanders of Johannesburg and the Rand, drawn from all quarters of the earth, but mainly English and American, are what the population of such new cities always are. Men came in thousands to make their fortunes rapidly, hoping before many years had passed to leave the country forever with the wealth they had accumulated. Between Englishmen and Dutchmen there is not naturally any racial antagonism; but in the Transvaal the conditions were such as almost necessarily to bring about strained relations between the burghers and the foreign element which threatened to swamp them. Everything had concurred to render the Transvaal Dutch the most backward, the most narrow-minded, and the least open to modern ideas and influences of all the African Dutch; while the new population which they had to govern was little suited to old-world notions of government, even if that government was honestly administered for the public good. But that was not the case, and the foreign residents burned with natural indignation when they saw that those whom they regarded as their tyrannical oppressors were accumulating large fortunes and expending great sums produced by the energy, industry and capital which the

foreigners themselves had brought in to the State.

In many respects the Dutch of South Africa, with whom till quite recent years the British were rapidly amalgamating, are a peculiar people. They constitute a very large proportion of the white population of Cape Colony. An excellent account of their peculiarities is given by Sir Harry Johnston in his valuable little book on African colonization.¹

"The old rivalry between the English and the Dutch, which had begun almost as soon as the Dutch were a free people, and competitors with us for the trade of the East and West Indies, had created a feeling of enmity between the two races, which ought never to be existed, seeing how nearly they are of the same stock, and how closely allied in language, religion, and to some extent in history—also how nearly matched they are in physical and mental worth. Curiously enough, there is far greater affinity in thought and character between the Scotch and the Dutch than between the Dutch and the English. The same thriftiness, bordering at times on parsimony, oddly combined with the largest-hearted hospitality, the same tendency to strike a hard bargain, even to overreach in matters of business, and the same dogged perseverance characterize both Dutch and Scotch; while in matters of religion almost precisely the same form of Protestant Christianity appeals to both; so much so that there is practically a fusion between the Dutch Reformed Church and the Presbyterians. Had Scotchmen been sent out to administer Cape Colony in its early days it is probable that something like a fusion might have taken place, and there would have been no Dutch question to cause discussion in South African politics in the nineteenth century. The Scotch would have understood the Boer settlers and their idiosyncrasies, and would not have made fun of them

¹ "A History of the Colonization of Africa by Alien Races," by Sir Harry Johnston, K.C.S.I. London: 1890.

or been so deliberately unsympathetic as were some of the earlier English governors. Slavery would have been abolished all the same, but it would have been abolished more cautiously, in a way that would not have left behind the sting of a grievance.

On the return of Sir Alfred Milner to South Africa in the spring of the present year it became evident that the long-standing difficulties between the Empire and the South African Republic were coming to a head. This it is abundantly clear was the wish of the Secretary of State in London and of his representative at Cape Town. The state of continual complaint on the one side, and of unwillingness to give redress on the other—of incessant wrangling and disputation—could not be indefinitely prolonged except at the cost of great loss of dignity and influence to Great Britain, and of permanent disquiet and instability in South Africa. In March a petition to the Queen, signed by over twenty thousand British subjects, resident at and near Johannesburg, was sent home by Sir Alfred Milner, who certified to its substantial genuineness and to the reality of the grievances of which it complained. They were treated, the petitioners said, as foreigners, enjoying practically none of the privileges of citizens, though they contributed out of their taxes a very large proportion of the income of the State. The Government was utterly corrupt, and recent legislation had steadily tended against their interests. They were defenceless in the midst of an armed Boer population, and they were without any constitutional means of helping themselves. They implored, therefore, the protection of her Majesty. They asked that their grievances might be redressed, and that they might be secured, by effectual guarantee of the State Government, "in their rights as British subjects."

At the end of the same month of March, President Kruger made elaborate speeches at Heidelberg and Johannesburg with reference to the uitlander grievances. As to the franchise, he spoke as follows:—

"I would not be worthy to be the head of the State if I did not protect the old burghers. Nor would I be worthy to be the head of the State if I did not bear in mind the interests of the new population with the object of helping them. I make no distinction between nationalities; I only make a distinction between good and bad people—between those who are loyal and those who are not. You all know that when first we discovered these gold fields, and they began to be worked, the franchise was given to any one who lived here a year. But when from all countries and all nations men began to stream in it became our duty to prevent the old burghers from being overwhelmed. I would not have been worthy of my position if I had allowed the new-comers to immediately sweep away and overwhelm the old inhabitants of the country."

Hence precautions had been taken, and the period of probation had been increased. At the time when he spoke it required fourteen years for the outlander to acquire full privileges as an enfranchised citizen. The President proposed to reduce this term by five years, and in another ten years or so to reduce it still further; and he pointed out the great difference that existed between the admission of foreigners as citizens of large countries, such as the United States of America, and their admission where they would become at once the majority and ruling power in the nation.

These proposals seemed at first sight to promise a step in the right direction, but Sir Alfred Milner pointed out that on examination they proved to be utterly inadequate in themselves, and afforded, moreover, no guarantee that even such as they were they would not

be swept away by a simple resolution of the First Raad, whenever it suited its purpose. It is clear that our Government could not possibly have accepted these offers as a settlement; but something at least was gained for negotiation in the language held by the President. The grievance was admitted, and the discussion of the proper measure of relief, so far as the franchise grievance was concerned, seemed likely to enter on the not unhopeful field of more or less.

In May a new chapter in the history of our relations with the Republic was opened by the publication of Sir Alfred Milner's despatch to Mr. Chamberlain, which was telegraphed from Cape Town on the 5th, and which was at once sent to the newspapers. It was a paper written with much force, and with a warmth of language unusual in diplomatic documents intended for publication. When negotiation is in contemplation or in actual progress it is often a difficult question to decide how far it is wise to make public the communications that are passing between the agent on the spot and the Government whom he serves. But in this case, no doubt, Mr. Chamberlain thought it of supreme importance to inform the British public of the precise attitude of the Colonial Office towards the difficult problems with which it had to deal; and as a matter of fact the despatch was accepted as a manifesto of national policy. As such it deserved and received almost universal support.

It is desirable to recall the principal points insisted upon in this memorable despatch. To begin with, the grievances alleged in the petition to the Queen were substantiated, and it was pointed out that, far from anything having been done to alleviate them, the treatment of the uitlanders was becoming worse and worse. British subjects resented

the personal indignity involved in the position of permanent subjection to the ruling caste, which owes its wealth and power to their exertion. The political turmoil in the South African Republic will never end till the *permanent uitlander population* is admitted to a share in the government, and while that turmoil lasts there will be no tranquillity or adequate progress in her Majesty's South African dominions. . . . The only condition on which the South African Colonies and the two Republics can live in harmony and the country progress is equality all round. South Africa can prosper under two, three, or six Governments, but not under two absolutely conflicting social and political systems, perfect equality for Dutch and British in the British Colonies side by side with permanent subjection of British to Dutch in one of the Republics. It is idle to talk of peace and unity under such a state of affairs.

Sir Alfred goes on to point out that it is the right and the interest of Great Britain to secure fair treatment of the uitlanders, of whom the majority are British subjects, and that the system hitherto followed of remonstrating, generally in vain, about every injury to individual Englishmen had become an impossible one. "It may easily lead to war, but will never lead to real improvement." Then comes an important paragraph, which must be quoted entire.

The true remedy is to strike at the root of all these injuries—the political impotence of the injured. What diplomatic protests will never accomplish, a fair measure of uitlander representation would gradually but surely bring about. It seems a paradox, but it is true, that the only effective way of protecting our subjects is to help them to cease to be our subjects. The admission of uitlanders to a fair share of political power would no doubt give stability to the Republic; but it at the same time will remove most of our causes of difference with it, and modi-

fy and in the long run entirely remove that intense suspicion and bitter hostility to Great Britain which at present dominates its internal and external policy.

The spectacle of thousands of British subjects, he continues, "kept permanently in the position of helots" (an absurdly exaggerated phrase to apply to men who came to, and remained in, the Transvaal solely for the personal advantage they found in so doing) was undermining all respect for the British Government in her own dominions. The Dutch press in and out of the Transvaal was libelling the British Government, and producing an effect upon the loyalty even of our Dutch fellow colonists, of whom thousands were being drawn into disaffection, thereby creating exasperation on the side of the British.

"I see nothing," concludes this despatch, "which will put an end to this mischievous propaganda but some striking proof of the intention of her Majesty's Government not to be ousted from its position in South Africa. And the best proof alike of its power and its justice would be to obtain for the uitlanders in the Transvaal a fair share in the government of the country, which owes everything to their exertions. It would be made perfectly clear that our action was not directed against the existence of the Republic."

Here assuredly were all the conditions to tax the firmness and diplomatic skill of the British High Commissioner. If anything was to be won by negotiation it would be necessary to soothe where he could British irritation, and to allay where he could Dutch suspicion. There can be no doubt that the policy he recommended was just and wise. It was rested upon no argumentative claims to suzerainty but on the right which clearly belongs to the British nation to protect the interests of its own subjects even in for-

eign lands, and to secure the peace and prosperity of South Africa. Had similar conditions sprung up across the Portuguese and not across the Transvaal frontier we should have equally been bound to take the requisite steps, whatever might have been the most appropriate ones, to bring to an end a permanent and highly dangerous condition of unstable equilibrium.

Mr. Chamberlain accordingly in his reply to Sir Alfred's despatch, recounted at length the uitlander grievances, declared that they had become quite intolerable, and based the right of Great Britain to insist upon their redress on a threefold ground. The Convention of 1884 was designed to secure equality of treatment in the South African Republic for uitlander and Boer. Great Britain was the Paramount Power in South Africa. It was a national duty to protect British subjects residing in a foreign country.

"The British Government," he wrote, "still cherish the hope that the publicity given to the present representations of the uitlander population, and the fact, of which the Government of the South African Republic must be aware, that they are losing the sympathy of those other States which, like Great Britain, are deeply interested in the prosperity of the Transvaal, may induce them to reconsider their policy, and by redressing the most serious of the grievances now complained of to remove a standing danger to the peace and prosperity not only of the Republic itself but also of South Africa generally."

And the Secretary of State went on to propose to President Kruger that Sir Alfred Milner and he should meet and discuss in a conciliatory spirit the best means of removing uitlander grievances and restoring good relations between Great Britain and the South African Republic.

Before, however, Mr. Chamberlain's despatch was shown to President

Kruger, or made public, a conference had been held at Bloemfontein on the invitation of the President of the Orange Free State, which was naturally most anxious that a peaceful solution should be found for the difficulties between its two neighbors. The conference failed, but the report of the discussions serves a very useful historical purpose in making clear the views of the two sides and the motives that actuated the negotiators. The action taken at the time by the Orange Free State and the Prime Minister and Government of Cape Colony also deserves the most careful attention. Nothing is to be gained by shutting our eyes to the difficulties of the other side; and the statement, so often made in this country, that we have been asking for nothing more for uitlanders in the Republic than is given by the Orange Free State, or by the British Colonies to resident foreigners within their boundaries, conceals the essential differences between the cases. Sir Alfred Milner put forward his case at the conference frankly and clearly.

The last thing he wanted, he said, was to impair the independence of the Republic. If the uitlanders were enfranchised it would strengthen that independence and diminish all necessity for British interference. He did not wish to swamp the old burghers, but merely to give to the new residents a moderate representation, so that they might in constitutional fashion seek redress for their own grievances. President Kruger seemed honestly anxious to get the High Commissioner to understand, even if he did not agree with, the feeling of the Boers on the subject. "I have come," he said, "to the conference in the trust that your Excellency is a man capable of conviction, to go into all points of difference." He claimed independence as to the internal affairs of the State; but if his Excellency in a friendly way

would give him hints on internal matters he would listen and do his best to remove all points of difference. As to the franchise question, which was to take precedence of all others,

"I am not surprised," said the President, "that in other places the men would only have to wait a year to get it, because there are millions of old burghers, and the few that come in cannot outvote the old burghers; but with us those who rushed in to the gold fields are in large numbers and of all kinds, and the number of burghers is still insignificant; therefore we are compelled to make the franchise so that they cannot all rush into it at once, and as soon as we can assure ourselves by a gradual increase of our burghers that we can safely do it, our plan was to reduce the time for any one there to take up the franchise, and that is my plan."

The Boer dislike to being swamped is a perfectly intelligible one, especially when one calls to mind the sacrifices which the Boers have made in the past to achieve their hard-won and beloved independence. It is hardly necessary to go into the details of the proposals made on the one side and the other. Sir Alfred suggested an increase of seats in the uitlander districts, and a five-year franchise for all residents who intended to remain permanently in the Republic, provided they would take an oath to obey the laws and defend the independence of the country; and he urged (probably with entire truth) that to grant less than this would satisfy no one and do no good. The Boer President's proposals were very different. They included indeed an increase of seats in the Gold Fields district, and a shortening of the period to qualify for franchise. Sir Alfred admitted that the scheme showed a great advance on the existing system; but as a settlement of the question it was utterly and entirely inadequate. The Presi-

dent showed himself most anxious to agree to some plan for settling future differences between the two States by arbitration; but the High Commissioner refused to mix up the fundamental question of the franchise with other matters, and at his instance the conference, having accomplished nothing, was closed.

The result was disappointing; but as yet there were many reasons for hoping that some pacific and satisfactory solution, by way of compromise, would be arrived at. Under these circumstances it was evidently all-important that the British demands should be of a kind, and be put forward in a manner, to attract general support in South Africa. The feeling among a large proportion of the people of the Free State, was quite opposed to the narrow, exclusive, retrograde, and corrupt system of government prevailing in the Transvaal. Policy, therefore, as well as the national honor made it incumbent upon us to convince even suspicious men that Great Britain had no intention of harking back to its old project of annexation, or of lending an ear to the counsels of those who had planned the treacherous raid of three years ago. There had slipped into one of the High Commissioner's telegraphic despatches an unfortunate paragraph which in South Africa was construed to convey a reflection upon the loyalty of our Dutch fellow subjects. It had been for some time the party cue of Mr. Rhodes's followers, with the exaggeration belonging to the bitterness of faction, to attribute disloyalty to their political opponents; yet only recently the Schreiner Ministry, supported by colonists of Dutch blood, had given signal evidence of its pride in the Imperial connection and its allegiance to the British flag. It was important that as far as possible the struggle with the Boer President should be prevented from widening

out into a contest of racial supremacy. The Schreiner Ministry and the President and Government of the Orange Free State felt this keenly, and offered what assistance they could to bring about a resumption of negotiations. Mr. Chamberlain has in the past in many speeches shown his recognition of the importance of keeping as far as possible the loyal Dutch of Cape Colony and the people of the Orange Free State in sympathy with the Imperial policy towards the Transvaal. Important to Great Britain as would be a rupture with the South African Republic, to the Orange Free State it would be a matter of vital interest, and to our Dutch fellow subjects distressing to the last degree. Mr. Schreiner and the Ministry of Cape Colony had carefully considered the proposals of President Kruger, and had come to the conclusion that they afforded at least a basis upon which the franchise question might be settled; and they communicated, it appears, with some diffidence, their views to Sir Alfred Milner on the subject. The Governor, however, considered the differences between himself and President Kruger irreconcilable, and advised the Cape Ministry to apply rather to the latter than to him—an appeal which was reinforced by a telegram next day from the Secretary of State asking the Cape Ministry to bring what influence they could to bear on the South African Republic to modify their proposals, and so to remove the necessity for British interference in affairs of this kind. At the same time the uitlanders and the burghers at Johannesburg were resolving, the former, that Sir Alfred Milner's proposals were an irreducible minimum; the latter, that the President's suggestions left nothing to be desired. Between these extremists stood the Cape Ministry and the President of the Orange Free State. And at the end of July, when there was

some appearance that the wrangle might reach a peaceful conclusion, Lord Selborne, in the House of Lords, was able to express the thanks of the Colonial Office to Mr. Schreiner and Mr. Hofmeyr, and to Mr. Fischer of the Orange Free State, "for the assistance they had rendered in bringing the proposals of the South African Republic to the point they had then reached."

It is clear enough in reading through these despatches that the prospect of our getting our way about the franchise without war lay in our convincing the Boer Government and the burghers that we did not intend to attack their independence. In these circumstances the mischief done by extremists on the uitlander side cannot be passed over. The South African League had established a branch at Johannesburg, and long before this, (viz. January 11, 1899) Sir William Butler, Acting Governor at Cape Town, had warned Mr. Chamberlain to be on his guard as to information that might reach him from that quarter. "I am convinced by the knowledge of facts which it is impossible to ignore that it is necessary to receive with caution, and even with a large measure of suspicion, statements emanating from the officers of that organization." Sir Alfred Milner, it is true, put much greater faith than his *locum tenens* in the representations of the League. Here, however, we are dealing not with their facts but with their policy, than which nothing could be more deplorable. At the very time when wise and moderate men, English and Dutch, in Cape Colony were striving to remove the not altogether unnatural suspicions which possessed the Boer mind as to the lurking wish of the British government to destroy their independence, the Transvaal branch of the League addresses (June 11) the High Commissioner, pointing out that

his proposed franchise would do very little good unless the uitlanders at once obtained a preponderating influence in the Raad! Of course Sir Alfred's proposal asked only a moderate share of the representation, and he again and again assured President Kruger that all fears that the uitlanders would be the governing power in the State were groundless. The League goes on to urge that in the meantime the sweeping reforms it enumerates in every part of the constitution of the Republic must be effected "by pressure from the suzerain Power," and all this must be done at once, contemporaneously with the grant of the new franchise! The Boer fort at Johannesburg also must be at once demolished.

With these gentlemen of the South African League, therefore, the "suzerainty" asserted is interpreted to involve what must in Boer eyes look very like the complete subjection of the Boer State. If this is the meaning given to "suzerainty" by influential uitlanders in the Transvaal no wonder that President Kruger refuses to admit the word, as, indeed, under the Convention of 1884 it would seem he has a right to do. Now the position of all parties may be roughly summed up, and the policies they were urging, as follows:—

1. Sir Alfred Milner claims for the uitlanders a moderate share of the governing power, thereby improving the government and strengthening the internal independence of the South African Republic.
2. President Kruger's wish is to do as little as he can towards enfranchising uitlanders, but he has been compelled to make considerable advances in the direction required.
3. The Ministry of Cape Colony, and the Orange Free State, hope for the sake of peace to get each party to accept a reasonable compromise.
4. The South African League and

the uitlander extremists wish under the name of suzerainty to annihilate at once Boer independence.

Now, policy No. 4 is, in truth, almost as much opposed to the policy of Sir Alfred Milner and Mr. Chamberlain as policy No. 2; yet it is singular, and to our mind very much to be regretted, that the former was not at once and publicly repudiated by the High Commissioner and the Secretary of State. It may have been considered that excessive uitlander demands would frighten the Boers into agreeing quickly with their more reasonable adversaries. These unrepudiated claims had unfortunately the opposite effect, and rendered the Boers more distrustful than ever of British good faith in adhering to the London Convention of 1884, and they must also have greatly weakened the influence of the loyal Dutch with the governments of the Transvaal and the Free State.

In the course of the summer there was great reason to hope that, in spite of the dogged obstinacy of the Boers on the one side and of the extravagant claims of the South African League and its supporters on the other, it would be possible for the two Governments to come to a satisfactory conclusion. Sir Alfred Milner at the conference had been prepared "to drop all questions connected with the position of British subjects, if only President Kruger could be persuaded to adopt a liberal measure of enfranchisement;" and he felt that he was carrying with him a considerable body of Dutch support. In truth, strong pressure was being brought to bear upon the President by those whom he could not suspect of any desire to overthrow his Republic. Mr. Schreiner was accused both in Cape Colony and England—such is the bitterness and the recklessness of faction—of urging the Transvaal Government to resist the proposals of the High Commissioner, who,

of course, as soon as the matter came to his knowledge declared the utter falseness of the story. That the party which supports Mr. Schreiner—perhaps it should be said the party that opposes Mr. Rhodes—is necessarily infected with treason is an amiable commonplace of Cape party politics, and one which, unfortunately, some of Mr. Rhodes's friends have done their best to popularize in England.

On July 20 Mr. Chamberlain was able to inform the House of Commons that President Kruger had greatly modified his proposals, and that the Government now hoped that the new law which the Raad had just passed would prove the basis of settlement on the lines laid down by Sir Alfred Milner at the conference. There were indeed difficult details to be arranged, but the Government trusted that the President would deal with them in such a spirit as not to hamper the substantial privileges he seemed willing to grant. And a week later this hopeful tone still prevailed, the Secretary of State in his despatch (July 27) to the High Commissioner noting the considerable advances made by the President to meet the British demands, and pointing out that the Volksraad "had now agreed to a measure intended to give the franchise immediately to those who have been resident in the country for seven years, as well as to those who may in future complete this period of residence. This proposal is an advance on previous concessions, and leaves only a difference of two years between yourself and President Kruger, so far as the franchise is concerned." Still, however, there were many details that required revising, and a fair proportion of seats must be allotted to uitlander districts. Moreover, the privileges granted ought not to be at the mercy of the Boer Government to reduce or abrogate at its own discretion. The best way in which these details could

be considered would be by the appointment by the High Commissioner and the President of delegates to discuss them and report to their respective Governments. Even on the subject of arbitration there appeared from this despatch to be a great approximation between the two sides; though the Secretary of State would not allow that any question could arise "in the interpretation of the preamble of the Convention of 1881, which governed the articles substituted in the Convention of 1884."

Thus, before Parliament was prorogued there was good reason for hoping that a peaceful solution would be found; and so there would have been if both parties in South Africa had really meant to carry forward and to be satisfied with Sir Alfred Milner's proposals as a basis for a substantial reform. In the despatch already quoted, Mr. Chamberlain rejoiced that "each new scheme (of President Kruger) seemed to be an advance and improvement on that which preceded it, and hoped that the plan just passed by the Volksraad might prove a basis for a settlement on the lines laid down at the Conference." It really looked as if the firmness of the Government and the High Commissioner were to be rewarded by the yielding of the President (unwillingly enough no doubt) to the steady pressure which had been applied. When, however, the High Commissioner came to examine the details and probable operation of the new law, he considered it was so hedged in with difficulties and uncertainties that he could not possibly advise its acceptance. Even in our own highly civilized country, Registration Acts and Franchise Acts are complex enough, and many an unwary citizen at every election finds himself improperly omitted from the electoral roll. Still, a little goodwill on both sides would have elucidated the meaning of the new law,

and have led to its amendment. The Boers, however, objected to the appointment of a joint commission to inquire into these matters, as they thought such a proceeding would jeopardize their legislative independence, and the uitlanders showed no sort of desire to find, as Mr. Chamberlain had done, the basis of a working system in the project passed by the Raad. President Kruger has always maintained that the uitlanders did not really wish to become enfranchised citizens of the Republic, and that it was a mere pretext to cover their wish to get rid of Boer independence. At all events, where the Home Government, and moderate men, Dutch and English, in the Cape, really thought some working system could be found to carry out the substance of the High Commissioner's plan, the uitlanders energetically repudiated any attempt at a compromise. In Sir Alfred Milner's despatch to Mr. Chamberlain (received August 5), there occurs the following noteworthy remark:

Great uncertainty still exists in view of the complicated provisions of the franchise law, as to how many uitlanders could fulfil the conditions for obtaining the franchise, and, still greater, as to how many will now attempt to obtain it. The one point which is constantly left out of sight in discussing the number of uitlanders who may become burghers under this or that scheme is the effect which the scheme, as a whole, is likely to produce upon their disposition to take up the rights and duties of burghership. Will they consider it worth while? Will they, especially those of them who possess a citizenship that they are proud of, be willing to change their allegiance? That depends in many cases upon the amount of faith they have in the fairness and practicability of the system of admission to burgher rights. That the uitlanders, especially the British uitlanders, will be particularly attracted by the offer now made to them—in its present form—is, I think, extremely improbable.

At all events, whatever the reason, as August passed on, the parties, instead of approaching each other, drew farther and farther apart. Perhaps, as a mere matter of diplomacy (if the importance of an immediate settlement of the franchise difficulty is considered) it might have been better for the Secretary of State to have abstained in his despatch from any reference to the doubtful claim of "suzerainty" under the Convention of 1881, and to the "paramountcy" of Great Britain over the South African Republic, both of which claims not unnaturally always suggest to the Boers that they hold a position of *vassalage* to the British Empire, far beyond the restrictions imposed by the Convention of 1884 which restrictions have never seriously been disputed by President Kruger. On the subject of arbitration the Secretary of State was willing to make a great advance in the direction desired by the President, and was ready to consider the best system of establishing an arbitration court to decide on the right interpretation of details of the articles of the Convention of 1884, and the President was shortly afterwards invited to appoint Boer delegates to meet British delegates, to inquire whether the measure passed by the Volksraad would efficiently carry out the object in view. The uitlanders in the Transvaal were not prepared to listen to any kind of compromise, and, indeed, were much afraid lest the British Government should accept one. Accordingly they did their best to persuade the High Commissioner not to yield an inch, and passed resolutions strongly urging the immediate recurrence to his Conference plan, which they had accepted with much reluctance, but which was the very least they would accept at all. They further proceeded to assert their claim to the demolition of the Boer forts, for the repeal of religious disabilities, for repre-

sentation in the First Raad proportionate to their numbers, for equality of language and other reforms "as essential to the exercise of the rights of a free people."

Once again we must call attention to the difference between the Imperial policy and the policy of the extremer uitlanders. Which was to prevail?

The Secretary of State was willing to accept the Boer franchise proposals and the large increase offered in the representation of the uitlander districts, on condition of a preliminary inquiry by a joint commission proving satisfactory into the practical effect of proposals undeniably very complicated and difficult to understand. At the same time the uitlanders were declaring that nothing less would content them than the privileges and constitutional system which, in recent years, Englishmen have enjoyed at home. Unless they could get these, they were willing, apparently, to accept the alternative of war, or an indefinite continuance in the condition of helots.

President Kruger, objecting to the joint commission, at the end of August proposed a counter project, dealing with the franchise and representation, going very much farther than any proposal he had hitherto made, and apparently even more liberal towards the uitlanders than Sir Alfred Milner's own proposals at the conference. The President's new project embraced a five years' retrospective franchise, ten seats for the uitlander districts in a first Raad of thirty-six, and equality between new and old burghers in voting for the election of the President of the Republic and Commandant General. The Government of the Republic declared that in offering these terms it was going far beyond what could reasonably be asked, but it did so "out of its strong desire to get the controversies between the two Governments settled, and further to

put an end to present strained relations between the two Governments, and the incalculable harm and loss it has already occasioned in South Africa, and to prevent a racial war, from the effects of which South Africa may not recover for many generations, perhaps never."

Surely after this it seems hardly possible that the two Governments should not have come to terms. The Boer proposals were, however, made subject to conditions, viz., that for the future her Majesty's Government would not interfere in the internal affairs of the Republic, would not insist further on its assertion of the suzerainty, and would agree to arbitration from which all foreign elements, except that of the Orange Free State, should be excluded. Mr. Chamberlain was ready to accept the Boer plan if, after examination by a British agent and a Transvaal agent, it appeared really to carry out the object proposed; and as to the conditions, he *hoped* that further interference in the affairs of the Republic would be unnecessary. But he would not waive the rights of Great Britain under the two Conventions, nor divest his country of the ordinary obligations of a civilized Power to protect its subjects in a foreign land. He would agree as to arbitration, and as to the suzerainty, he referred the South African Republic to his previous despatch:—

"Her Majesty's Government," the despatch concluded, "also desire to remind the Government of the South African Republic that there are other matters of difference between the two Governments which will not be settled by the grant of political representation to the uitlanders, and which are not proper subjects for reference to arbitration. It is necessary that these should be settled concurrently with the questions now under discussion, and they will form, with the question of arbitration, proper subjects for consideration at the conference," which Mr. Chamberlain proposed should be held

by the High Commissioner and the President at Cape Town.

So far, then, it would appear that her Majesty's Government were carrying all before them, that the uitlanders would obtain the very franchise suggested by Sir Alfred Milner, that they would have a larger representation than had been contemplated in the Raad, and that they would have the power of voting for (before many years had passed the predominant power in electing) the State President himself. Perhaps, in view of these immense and immediate gains, it might have been more diplomatic not to refer to the "etymological question" of the suzerainty, or to propose to bring the President to Cape Town to talk over with the High Commissioner all other outstanding questions. We do not know how this may be; but the South African Republic did not at once send a reply, and the High Commissioner, representing uitlander feeling, urgently pressed the Home Government to come to an immediate decision. "British South Africa," he telegraphed on August 31, "is prepared for extreme measures, and is prepared to suffer much in order to see the vindication of British authority." Now, British South Africa includes a very large number of loyal Dutch British subjects (and, be it said, no small number of Englishmen who distrust the counsels urged by the uitlanders of the Transvaal), and it cannot be supposed that in their earnest desire to avert war they, or even the Cape Ministry, were at all anxious to abandon the spirit of compromise and to hurry the Home Government into a decision which might bring it about. British influence would, in their view, be sufficiently established by our winning from President Kruger the terms, and more than the terms, so long demanded by the High Commissioner, and so long refused by the Boer Government. We certainly believe that Sir Alfred Milner

described accurately the feeling of one of the political parties in Cape Colony, when he spoke of a desire for "extreme measures;" but he certainly did not therein speak the sentiments of the Colony as a whole or those of his own constitutional advisers.

The High Commissioner was entirely justified in looking with the utmost suspicion at the reforms suggested by the President, and in advising his Government as to the necessity of rigidly testing their probable operation. He was also right to guard against it being alleged that her Majesty's Government, having obtained what they asked for the uitlanders, were debarred from entering upon any other questions between the two governments. The Boers, however, in their note of September 2, very foolishly withdrew their offer of August 21, as they considered that its terms and conditions were not frankly accepted by her Majesty's Government. They did not, they said, ask that Government to give up any of its rights either under international law, or by virtue of any treaty, but they denied the existence of the suzerainty since the Convention of 1884, and referred to their own former despatch. They further referred to the franchise reform already passed, and apparently were ready to consider the question of the appointment of delegates to examine its efficacy, a point upon which the Secretary of State had formerly insisted.

Mr. Chamberlain's reply to this despatch was firm in substance and moderate in tone. On September 9 he, in the first instance, most properly repudiated the claim of the Republic to the "status of a Sovereign International State," and could not enter into any agreement involving the admission of such a "status." He declined further to go back from the proposals of August to the earlier proposals, which he now considered quite insufficient; but

he was ready to accept the August proposals of the Boer Government as to franchise and seats, and he made no mention whatever of the "suzerainty." "The acceptance of these terms," the despatch proceeded, "would at once remove the tension between the two governments, and would in all probability render unnecessary any further intervention on the part of her Majesty's Government to secure the redress of grievances which the uitlanders would themselves be able to bring to the notice of the Executive Government and Raad." It concluded by urging, in the interests of South Africa, the relief of the present strain, and pointed to a future conference between the High Commissioner and the President on outstanding questions not concerned with uitlander grievances.

The remainder of the correspondence can be easily summarized. The reply of the South African Republic (dated September 16) adhered to its previous despatch, and agreed to the joint commission to inquire into the law which had been passed, but entirely refused again to take up the August proposals, unless the conditions stipulated were accepted; to which, on the 22nd, the Secretary of State answers, repeating that no rights are claimed over the internal affairs of the Republic, except those derived from the Conventions or based on international law; that it is evident that nothing can be gained by further pursuing the discussion, and that "her Majesty's Government are now compelled to consider the question afresh, and to formulate their own proposals for a final settlement of the issues which have been created in South Africa by the policy constantly followed for many years by the Republic. They will communicate to you the result of their deliberations in a later despatch."

We have given, we hope, a fair account of the substantial matters dis-

cussed in a lengthy series of despatches, so far as they deal with the policy pursued on the two sides. Of various incidents differently represented here and in the Transvaal, which have been the cause of much bitter ill feeling between English and Dutch, we have said nothing. It is right that cases of injustice, or unfairness, or tyranny should be inquired into; but it is not right by gross exaggeration and partisan statements to use them to inflame still further a race animosity already lamentably violent.

Since August last national feeling has run high, and excitement has been fanned by much wild writing and speaking. It is not a question, we are told, of justice or of good faith, but of who is to rule in South Africa. And throughout September constant pressure has been put on the Government to break off negotiations and "send an ultimatum" to President Kruger, backed by an army of invasion. When responsible men urged patience and peace at public meetings, attempts were made to drown their voices with shouts of "Majuba Hill." Nevertheless, Lord Salisbury and his Cabinet have absolutely refused to listen to these violent counsels, and at the date we are writing they have not closed the door on their temperate proposals of September 8; nor have they, as might have been expected from the despatch of September 22, made any further demands. Surely the intelligent reader of this long diplomatic correspondence must feel lost in astonishment when he remembers what war means to the Transvaal, to South Africa and to the British Empire, that war should arise out of a discussion in which the two governments show themselves so very nearly agreed!

But is British power in South Africa really trembling? If so, all Englishmen are ready to make any sacrifice to maintain it, and here it is useful to

clear our heads for a time of all the complications introduced by treaties and conventions, by claims of paramountcy and suzerainty on the one side, and of independence or of sovereignty on the other, and to look at the great facts of the position. The British Empire is strongly established in South Africa, and the links which unite the colonies with the Mother Country can never be broken so long as the colonists of English race wish the connection to endure. It is men of English, American and German blood who constitute the progressive part of the community, and have the future in their hands. British power protects their coasts and their ports, and keeps the colonies in constant touch with England. It is as easy, though it is more costly and takes longer, to send an army of 50,000 men to Cape Colony or Natal as to Salisbury Plain or the Curragh. Surrounding the Dutch States on every side, excepting only where Portuguese territory forms one boundary of the South African Republic, the British colonies cut them off completely from the rest of the world. They nowhere touch the sea, and without British permission not a company of soldiers, not a man—we may almost say not a letter nor a telegram—could be sent into the Dutch States by the most powerful nation in Europe. To the north of the Transvaal, unless Rhodesia should prove a delusion, a large British population will soon be found. To the east of the Free State, Natal, the most English of South African colonies, is filling up. Can it be supposed that such colonies as the Cape, Natal and Rhodesia will not, year by year, steadily increase their importance, at present surely sufficiently marked, over the stagnant little Dutch communities which they have surrounded? But this is not all, for in the South African Republic itself, *because* money is to be made there, and *because* there is a future, Englishmen flock in such over-

whelming numbers as to prove that that future will be largely and surely theirs. Already the foreign element, mostly English, number two-thirds of the population, though it is hardly more than a dozen years since the influx began. Facts will decide far more surely than the best penned despatches what ultimately will be the complexion of South African civilization and government—whether English or Dutch. The notion that there is a formidable Dutch conspiracy “to oust British influence” (that, we think, is the phrase) “from South Africa” is the strangest nightmare that ever afflicted the most nervous of “Imperialist” minds. Our statesmen here and in South Africa have ample work to do in smoothing the pathway to the ultimate unification of the South African colonies, in assisting co-operation between the races, and their ultimate fusion. But which race will prevail in the end will be settled by racial characteristics, and the natural conditions presented by the soil, the climate, and the advantages to be gained in the colonies themselves.

Much has been said about the duplicity of the Boers and of their leader; and Sir Alfred Milner has been wisely on his guard lest privileges to be granted with one hand should be withdrawn with the other. To dispel the suspicions of such a man as Kruger would task—perhaps overtask—the skill of our most experienced diplomatists. In the first place he would have had to convince the President that the policy of the British High Commissioner was not in reality moved by a party in South Africa, which, in truth, hardly takes the trouble to conceal its hostility to the independence of the Republic. The President is himself a rough, uncultivated man, with a very strong will. Mr. Lecky, speaking both from personal acquaintance with him and from knowledge acquired from others, described him some three years ago, in

an address delivered at Dublin, as bearing a striking resemblance “to the stern Puritan warrior of the Commonwealth—a strong, stubborn man, with indomitable courage and resolution, with very little tinge of cultivation, but with a rare natural shrewdness in judging men and events, impressing all who came in contact with him with the extraordinary force of his nature.” He is a member of the “Dopper” sect, who are opposed to everything in the nature of innovation, “and is ardently religious, believing, it is said, as strongly as Wesley in a direct personal inspiration guiding him in his acts.”

In England far too little attention has been given to the attitude of the Cape Dutch and of the Orange Free State. Mr. Schreiner (than whom her Majesty has no more loyal subject) and his ministers are the constitutional advisers of Sir Alfred Milner in matters concerning the interests of Cape Colony. The Orange Free State have everything to lose by entering into a quarrel with the Imperial Government; and we think the language of the Cape Dutch and of the Government of the Orange Free State very honestly reflects the difficulty of the position in which they find themselves. Nothing but a conviction that the independence of the Dutch States is the real question at stake could have forced the Free State to incur the certain disasters which their alliance with the Transvaal must bring upon them. It is not from this side that shouts of “No compromise” come. Neither do they in the least degree wish to perpetuate in the Transvaal the exclusive system from which their own States are free. The address of June 30 of the representatives of the Dutch Reformed Church to the High Commissioner gives exact expression to the feelings of many thousands of our fellow-countrymen. They are filled, they say, with alarm at the tension between the Dutch and English races in Cape Colony and

in the Transvaal, which has been greatly increased by the "war-like attitude assumed by an influential portion of the local and the British Press." It was not their business to touch on politics, but as holding responsible positions in the Reformed Church in South Africa, as

preachers of the gospel of peace, as representing a Church, one in creed, language, membership, blood relationship with the burghers of the Transvaal, as loyal subjects of our beloved Queen, we desire to urge your Excellency to leave nothing undone which may tend to avert active hostilities. We shudder to think of the consequences which ~~are~~ are sure to follow such an eventuality. The race feeling between the Dutch and English would be intensified, the breach between the two sections of our South African community would become irreparable, the allegiance of her Majesty's loyal Dutch subjects would sustain the severest shock it has ever been subjected to, and the hope of a united South Africa would be gone for ever. To us standing outside the political arena the difference between the proposals of your Excellency and those of President Kruger would hardly appear to justify the horrors in which active warfare between her Majesty's troops and the burghers of the Republic would involve the whole of South Africa for many a day.

Surely there is a ring of pathetic earnestness about this address which entitles it to the attention of Englishmen at home.

Whatever view may be taken of South African questions, surely no English statesman can regard without the deepest dislike a racial war between the Dutch and English inhabitants of those regions! In the eyes of the greatly preponderating black population what must be the appearance of such a war? To them it must seem that their conquerors and masters have fallen out amongst themselves at last, over the plunder. To the two Dutch States the war involves the loss of their

dearly prized independence. When war has once begun it certainly will not end till British arms have destroyed their power of resistance for the future. British victory, therefore, which is not in doubt, involves British rule. But the mere fact that this is so makes it appear to every citizen of the Republic of the Free State that he is fighting for national independence against an English conqueror. When Englishmen read of old men of seventy and of boys of fourteen flocking into the ranks to fight what seems to them the battle of freedom against a foreign conqueror, they cannot but feel an uncomfortable searching of conscience as to whether these things must really be, and whether this war cannot, with wisdom and honor, be even yet avoided. When the war is over what is to be our next step? All of us had hoped to see the various States of South Africa freely working out their own constitution, and forming in time a great federation under, and proud of, the British flag. It is bad to build a free constitution on the ruins left by racial war.

It may be that things have gone too far, and that with opposing armies actually in the field, it is impossible to avoid the arbitrament of war. Undenially the position is an extremely difficult one. Up till now the Government has entirely declined to be driven by wild shouts of popular excitement into the precipitation of a disastrous struggle. If war comes, as come it may, in spite of every effort which statesmen sincerely attached to peace can make to prevent it, then the British nation will of course do its part, and carry to a successful and, we hope, a rapid issue, a war upon which thinking men cannot but enter with heavy hearts.

Since the above was written a despatch has been received from the Government of the South African Republic demanding, under threat of an immediate declaration of war, the

withdrawal of British troops from the neighborhood of their frontier, and the recall to England of all troops under orders to land in any part of South Africa. No doubt can now remain of the course to be pursued, and the nation must accept the challenge so recklessly thrown down.

Edinburgh Review.

THE SAILING OF THE LONG-SHIPS.

OCTOBER, 1800.

They saw the cables loosened, they saw the gangways cleared,
They heard the women weeping, they heard the men that
cheered,
Far off, far off, the tumult faded and died away,
And all alone the sea-wind came singing up the Bay.

"I came by Cape St. Vincent, I came by Trafalgar,
I swept from Torres Vedras to golden Vigo Bar,
I saw the beacons blazing that fired the world with light
When down their ancient highway your fathers passed to
fight.

"O race of tireless fighters, flushed with a youth renewed,
Right well the wars of Freedom befit the Sea-kings' brood;
Yet as ye go forget not the fame of yonder shore,
The fame ye owe your fathers and the old time before.

"Long-suffering were the Sea-kings, they were not swift to
kill,
But when the sands had fallen they waited no man's will;
Though all the world forbade them, they counted not nor
cared,
They weighed not help or hindrance, they did the thing they
dared.

"The Sea-kings loved not boasting, they cursed not him that
cursed,
They honored all men duly, and him that faced them, first;
They strove and knew not hatred, they smote and toiled to
save,
They tended whom they vanquished, they praised the fallen
brave.

"Their fame's on Torres Vedras, their fame's on Vigo Bar,
Far-flashed to Cape St. Vincent it bursts from Trafalgar;
Mark as ye go the beacons that woke the world with light
When down their ancient highway your fathers passed to
fight."

Henry Newbolt.

AMONG OLD ACQUAINTANCES.

Once more September, with its conscientious squirrels busy at their work of keeping the earth replenished with woodlands by timely and assiduous planting, its partridges calling to one another from among the corn-stooks, perplexed at the sudden animosity of man. On the dahlias, yet again, the red-admirals sit winking their bright wings, and in pavilions of purple plum-skin, as of old, the wasp holds its autumnal *levée*. I like September and the character of it. It accomplishes facts. It brings the harvest home. It completes the ripening of the apples and grapes. Routine vanishes at the first crisp breath of its morning; everything is up and doing. The leaves all set to work changing color; berries relieve flowers of their turn of duty; birds suddenly remember and take to song again. Autumn has come again with its rustling footstep, and the birds who enjoyed and brightened our sunnier months are banding together to follow the swallow summer that has already flown. We are sorry that the hot days and lengthened evenings are over—who can help regretting them?—yet we all welcome the change with the Fall of the year. We feel the earth beginning to move again; the engines are beating; and beautiful as were the summer seas upon which we have been of late so lazily becalmed, it is well to feel the purposeful push of the new season, and the tonic of motion once more. August had been a month of Capuan delightfulness. I had forgotten, being away in the demoralizing Tropics two summers in succession, how glorious our August is. Yet, when I am abroad, and the dwellers in "Isles of Eden" ask me about our English weather, I always maintain that there is no other climate in the world than

ours that is good enough for men and women as good as we are to live in. And, coming home again, I am confirmed in my globular insularity by the splendor of August. Yet September is better still.

July, it seems to me, has less character than any other of the twelve. It is a born-in-the-purple sort of month, sitting in state in the middle of the year, enjoying for its own reputation the fulfilment of flowers and the promises of fruit. But it does nothing itself that we should crown it. On one side June has glorified it with its roses and lilies and the breath of new-mown hay. On the other cheek lies, premonitory, the glow of August's ripened grain and ruddy orchards. It understands both the seasons, coming on as the one when it is laggard, and as the other when it anticipates its cues. And the two seasons endow it with gifts with both hands, delighting in its beauty. Glorious months, too, are these for watching at one's ease the open-air life of orchard, spinney and garden, and happily making re-acquaintance with old acquaintances.

There is a large summer-house in the orchard, with a table in it, and commodious seats, a weather-proof thatch as solid as a cottage roof, and stout walls of young pine logs and oaken rustic work. But it is so very little used that if it were not that its ruin would cause great inconvenience to certain wrens and robins, it might really not be kept in repair at all. But the wrens and robins have taken to it too seriously to have their confidence betrayed. To them it is one of the leading "natural features" of the landscape: what a heathered hillside is to grouse, or a dark pool to trout. According as their mood runs it is their "sweet Auburn"

or their hundred-gated Thebes. But, whichever it may be, the summer-house is their property, acquired by the simple process of taking possession of it, and should you go into it they do not hesitate to remind you that you are in the way. I sometimes feel on going in that I ought to have brought some agent's card or "order to visit." Certainly, when speaking of having made use of it, one should add, "by the courtesy of the wrens," or, "by the kind permission of the robins." Their young are absurdly tame—all too tame, poor little mites, for their safety. One day, entering the summer-house I found the robins feeding three young ones on the seat. The mother flew away, but the fledglings stayed where they were, as she told them. They moved up a little, so to speak, to oblige me, to make room for me, as it were, on the seat. As I remained for nearly two hours, the parents had to abandon their timidity, and to feed their children just as if they did not see me sitting there. They were never actually disagreeable about one staying long, but the persistent way in which the wrens kept coming to see if you had gone yet, chirping disappointedly to find you had not, and flying away, was disconcerting.

And as you wrote tiny flocks of fluff would come sailing down from the roof on to the table, and scraps of moss drop on your head or paper. I do not think the wrens did it purposely, but still, at the back of it all, why should there not have been an idea that it was as well that you should be allowed to see that everybody was not so idle as yourself, and that, while you sat there trifling with pencil and paper, others might be really busy and deserving of consideration?

The roof was stuffed with wrens' nests old and new, and it is a curious fact that one day I saw the same wren working at two. At any rate, it flew up sometimes to the one and sometimes to

the other, with moss in its beak, and displayed, so far as I could see, the same proprietary interest in both. Which of all the nests the family ultimately emerged from I did not discover, but one day I found five young wrens cuddled together all in a row on the "window sill." As I came up unexpectedly round the corner of the house, the old birds had no time to lead their infants off, and were compelled to make the best of the situation, which was absurdly complicated by the total indifference of the little ones to my presence, and their refusal to take me seriously or hold their tongues. I confess I did not do much writing while the old birds were coaxing their brood away, for one of the parents sat close to me all the time, threatening to take my life, if I interfered with the strategic movements to the rear that were being executed, while the other was persuading the family of midgets, one by one, to hop along the rustic work and get out of sight.

But it is very odd how quaintly the parent birds, in spite of their surpassing attachment to their nestlings, will sometimes endanger the lives of their family out of sheer crankiness. As for evidence whereof, take this story of the tits and the pipe.

At the door of a disused conservatory, which had been turned into a "pet-house" for the children, there had stood for over a year a piece of old iron pipe, seventeen inches long. It stood on end, and never being moved, a growth of young suckers from the roots of a plum-tree had sprouted up round it. Twenty times a day the children went in and out of the conservatory, for there were a hedgehog and some guinea-pigs, a rabbit and some whimsical mice, to say nothing of many cages of caterpillars and bottles of newts and tadpoles to be looked after—and sometimes a dog or two would go with them, sometimes a cat; on occasion

even Jane, the donkey. And all this time the rusty iron pipe stood on end by the door and never got knocked down. This in itself was wonderful. And one day a couple of great tits (*Parus ater*), looking about for an eligible site for a nursery, chanced upon the pipe, and in spite of the distressing inconveniences of its uprightness, in spite of the noisy traffic at the door, decided that they had found "just the very thing," and proceeded to build a nest in it. They did not fill the pipe up with materials and then make their nest on the top. No; they built their nest on the ground, at the bottom of the pipe, seventeen inches down, perpendicularly. Now the pipe was barely four inches in diameter, yet the tits managed to build not only a symmetrical nest, but actually reared four young ones in it, at the bottom of the pipe. The nestlings, of course, were unable to escape from their nursery, and the consequence was that the old birds had to go on feeding the young ones till they were full-grown and fully fledged.

I had almost made up my mind to lay the pipe down on its side and free the imprisoned birds—for it was quite distressing to listen, day by day, to the parents calling to the little ones to come out, and the little ones crying out in reply, "We can't"—when one morning the gardener announced that the birds were going. We hurried to the spot, and were lucky enough to see the last of the family escape. What we actually saw was this. A bird flew down off the fence and dived into the pipe. A few seconds elapsed, and suddenly out came two birds. They perched for a moment on the pipe, flew up onto the fence, thence into the plum-tree, and so away. We looked into the pipe and found the nest was empty, so that what we had seen was one of the old birds fetching out the last of the brood. How it helped it we could not see.

The tits, as every one knows, are

among the most expert acrobats of the bird-world, but even the consciousness of exceptional agility would hardly explain or excuse the selection of such a preposterous nesting-place. Naturally they thought that the pipe was a permanent fixture, but even so, it was a feeble choice—for although the old birds could dive headlong in and shoot out again with amazing swiftness, never resting on the edge, whether going down or coming up, parental instinct should surely have forewarned them that fledglings would find it very difficult to scramble up seventeen inches of pipe. Eventually they must have had to work themselves into the daylight by the alternate pressure of the wings against the side, with, perhaps, one of the parents "hunching" up the climber from underneath.

Two other instances of equally defective intelligence in nest-builders have come under my notice this summer, both in aucuba "laurels." The long, supple shoots of this plant end in tufts of heavy large leaves, and they often get bunched, as it were, several shoots interlacing the sprouting of the leaves. In one of these bunches which hung out from the bush drooping over a path, a pair of bullfinches built and had three eggs. But some one passing knocked the eggs out of the nest and the birds deserted it. On going to take the empty nest, I found that if I wished to cut it out I should have to destroy a good part of the bush, for the poor birds had discovered that the pulling of the shoots in different directions, when the wind wagged their heavy heads, would tear their nest to pieces. So to steady the nest they began interlacing all the shoots and twigs that were in combination by "stays," and eventually found that they had set themselves the hopeless task of tying up the whole bush.

During the process the nest assumed the shape of a comet, the actual nest

itself being the "nose" of the meteor, and its "tail" a gradually widening network of delicate, thread-like roots, the whole extending for a very considerable distance into the bush. Pulling out the nest, ten inches of this outer structure came out with it, and it seemed to reach as far again. The intelligence of the little builders was handsomely showing in thus trying to remedy their original want of judgment; but how came they to make their first mistake?

A chaffinch did the very same thing. The best book on British birds extant is, doubtless, Seebohm's, but the author is in error when he says that this bird does not build in evergreens—the present one being a case in point. The chaffinches had found a bunch of aucuba twigs which seemed to them a suitable site, and attaching the foundation of the nest to three of the twigs, went on with the work. The extraordinary time, even for chaffinches (which are curiously deliberate builders), that they took over their nest attracted my attention, for though one or other of the birds seemed always doing something, they never got any nearer to the finishing touches. The truth was that they found that each of the three twigs was working in a separate direction, and that the rings with which they had expected to keep the nest fast to them had no grip on the smooth polished surface of the aucuba bark, but slipped loosely up or down as the twigs moved. As a matter of fact, of course, the nest was quite safe, for the triangular duel going on between the twigs, their three opposing pulls, ensured its security. But the birds thought the nest would slip down, so they set to work and bandaged each of the supports in thick rolls of cobweb and fibre, and taking in a fourth twig treated it in the same way. Contented, apparently, at last, they lined the nest. The hen laid one egg, and then the nest

was deserted. I suppose that when she came to sit on the nest, the bird got frightened at the various earth-quaky movements that went on underneath her and confided to her spouse her belief that the place was coming to pieces. When taken out, the nest had four ribs or rolls on it, and was probably the most unshapely chaffinch-nest ever built.

It would be very easy to multiply, even from my own experience of birds, examples of this half-witted intelligence in the matter of nest-building, and I cannot understand why a certain class of writers persist in calling upon us to admire the subsequent ingenuity which makes good the original carelessness. The missel-thrush that builds its nest where it cannot escape the eye of the passer-by, but so builds it that it looks as if someone had pulled down a handful out of it; the waterfowl that cleverly raises its nest when it finds the water rising dangerously; the chiff-chaff that builds so close on to the edge of the foot-path that it dare not fly direct to it, but runs along under the grass to reach it—these are all very ingeniously self-preservative, no doubt, in their after-thoughts, but they can hardly be admired for common-sense in their first ideas. A change of site a few feet one way or the other would have secured them all just the same security without making life a burden by daily apprehensions.

As for the tits, the bullfinches and the chaffinches, of whom I have specially written, they are illustrative of bird eccentricity rather than of sagacity. This much, at any rate, is certain, that the human being who built his house on a sliding bog, and then by marvelous feats of engineering kept it from sliding when the bog did, could hardly be cited as a model of intelligence, any more than the couple who should construct a nursery to which, like the tits, they had only access by the chimney.

It is among the keener penalties of "the splendid isolation" of humanity among the powers, greater and less, of the animated world, that we men and women should be no judges of cobwebs.

Of the variety *communis vel hortensis* we cannot always help taking note in passing, because, as a rule, it stretches across garden-paths on the parallel of the human nose. Another local kind also we sometimes observe, a cobweb that counterpanes a patch of moorland or a whole meadow, stretching, while they sleep, silken awnings over the small fly-folk, who make their dormitories among the roots or on the stems of the herbage. A dismal awakening for them and up-flying the next morning! But of the cobwebs "found-all-over-the-houseous," the cobweb *par excellence*, everybody's cobweb, we know it only as "cobweb." There are no varieties of it in our gross classifications, nor grades in quality. Here the chaffinch has the advantage of us—as the figurative American has it, "the bulge" on us.

When the chaffinch asks for cobweb she sees that she gets it. She is not to be put off with trash. And while her ladyship turns over its samples, the the spinner of the stuff crouches itself out of sight, pretending it belongs to the corner, is, in fact, part of the corner, its extreme angle, and not a pottled-bodied, edible spider.

Nor is the customer "soon sulted to her mind." Some threads are too dusty, some have been in stock too long. What she wants, and means to have, too, "even if she turns the whole shop over for it" (and eats the spinner into the bargain), are fresh, sticky strands that will make an invisible cement and ligament for her lichens and moss. So she picks and chooses with most amusing fastidiousness—"pernickity" is, I think, the epithet applied to human beings who are so "fid-faddy"—or is it the

other way about? Anyhow, that is what the spider, hiding for dear life, behind a tattered bit of its own arras, thinks she is. "A plague on the hussy; will she *never* make up her mind and go?" At last she does. Satisfied that she has picked out all the very best of the cobwebs that are to be got she flits away to her nest.

By-and-bye she is back again, and just as "finnicky" as ever—the despair of shopmen and the horror of the shop-walker. Apparently she has forgotten she had been there before. At any rate, she begins making her selections with all the nice deliberation of her previous visit—itsself, perhaps, the twentieth or the hundredth—and it is only after she has fastidiously ransacked the veranda that she is content. And with what a little. Packed up in her beak, her laborious collection really amounts to nothing: a ridiculously small parcel at best, for cobwebs crowd up very small. But, after all, it is not altogether becoming in us human beings to make objections to the shoppings of a chaffinch. If the chaffinch considers a bundle of cobwebs that would just nicely cork up a weevil-hole in a nut to be a fit and proper load for her, and as much as she can handle properly at a time, we may depend upon it that it is. She would be a sorry housekeeper, indeed, who took home more than she could do with.

Oddly enough, the chaffinch never seems to understand that after every visit she makes the residue of the cobweb becomes more and more inferior in quality, for she goes on for several days depleting the edges and corners of the panes and the woodwork of their web with precisely the same daintiness of choice as at first. At last there is none left at all, not even any of the "worst worst." She has eliminated it by grades to the veriest dregs, the dustiest and grimest fag-ends and rubbish, and in the end has carried even these off,

with just the same affectation of selection.

And now, bare indeed in their chinks and crannies, sit the poor weavers. Thinking to glean where she has already scraped, the chaffinch comes back again, and peering into the untapestried corners and the cracks beneath the putty from which she has dragged the silken hangings, she describes the spider where he sits, with all his knees cruddled up, and having stripped its house even to its wallpaper, she now eats the householder. "A dismal thing to do," as the little Oyster said to the Carpenter. Arachne sometimes disconcerts her visitor by making a dash for liberty, and the chaffinch, as the insect scampers over her toes, hops to one side with a chirp and gesture of long-skirted annoyance, very much as a girl might do if suddenly charged by a mouse. But, as a rule, the bird catches the spider, and thus makes a handsome clearance of the premises.

The cobwebs so conscientiously assorted and carried away, are, of course, intended for the fastening together of the materials of the chaffinch's nest; as a rule, one of the most beautiful and instructive of bird-buildings—and as a rule, too, one of the longest in the building. For in her house she is nothing if not tasteful, and the mere outside will take her as many days to construct as it will the greenfinch hours. Moreover, it is "she" as a rule, not "he" that builds the nest.

Well, indeed, has science called the chaffinch *Cœlebs*. Though it is supposed that the male collects the material and that the hen is the architect, I know, from my own observation, that the hen spends much of her day in getting together not only cobweb to bind the moss and lichen, but the moss and lichen too. What *Cœlebs* may contribute toward the building I am not at liberty to say, for it is ex-

tremely difficult to detect him going to the nest.

He is thereabouts all the time, for you cannot approach the spot without his at once beginning from his hiding-place to deplore, in a pained tone of voice, the miserably indifferent taste of your conduct. It is the most elegantly gentlemanly protest imaginable. His finer feelings are wounded, but he is not out of temper. He does not abuse you as the blackcap does, nor half choke himself in voluble incoherence, scolding you as the whitethroat will. *Cœlebs* merely repines at, regrets and complains of, your behavior. He would wish that you had had the advantages of better bringing up, and laments the negligence of your parents and your lack of refinement.

For himself, he is the very essence of good form, and just now when he has got on his summer suit, his manners are all in harmony with the beauty and exquisite fit of his apparel. You will often see other birds looking as if they had been dressed by a country tailor. Never *Cœlebs*. A sparrow in a "reach-me-down" suit is not out of order in a hedgerow where blackbirds go about in frumpish frocks. But the chaffinch is always the pink (or "spink," should I say?) of neatness, the glass of fashion, and the mould of form; as dapper as any beau, spark, or gallant in the verses of Pope; as spruce as any fop, coxcomb, or dandy in the prose of the Tatler. He never leaves "home" until groomed to perfection, and thereafter, like a gentleman, he betrays no consciousness of being thoroughly well-dressed, and goes through his day without any of your finical humors or fantastical Tom Noddy caprices, as comports an elegant little bird of naturally delicate tastes and dainty self-respect. Even when pressed by hunger, when there is famine for the birds in the garden, he never puts himself forward.

It is always "After you, sir, with the

crumbs" to the other birds. As I said, when writing about my small almsmen, what time the snow was on the ground, and food was put out for those in want, "the courtly chaffinches come with a gay step, chirping to each other as if to give and take confidence, but eating nothing, moving obsequiously out of the way of every gluttonous sparrow, and pecking only with apologies." Not that he is a coward in the least. "Even the polite chaffinch, always ready to give place, and never coming forward without a 'by your leave,' gets out of patience at last with the froward sparrow, and dabs it on the sconce," elegantly, as if fencing in a court suit, but severely, as one who is master of his weapon.

So that the chaffinches, both Cœlebs and Cœlebs's wife are self-respecting persons, and, as all such should be, are respected. And when they combine to build a nest, and are themselves satisfied with their work, you may depend upon it that there is but little reason for disparagement. Their "house beautiful" may be long in the building, but when built it is fit for lovers of their art to live in.

But enough of chaffinches. Let me tell you, indulgent reader, of the manner of the passing of Gray Rabbit.

Gray Rabbit was the oldest rabbit in the warren, and he had just waked up in the long cool grass of the meadow, where he had been lying with his ears shut up and laid along his back, and his nose between his fore-paws. It was too hot to go regularly to bed, one of those days, as he said, "when the bed-clothes look as if they had been kicking about all night, and the pillow hasn't had a wink of sleep." So he was going to "lie out" where he was in the meadow. He had already scratched his head on both sides very carefully and sleepily, and had stretched himself out so long to yawn that he looked like a rabbit-skin, and he was just wondering

whether he should go and have a light breakfast of carrot-tops in the garden close by, or stay and pick out the young clover growing amongst the hay, when a strange thing happened. Gray Rabbit heard a whirring noise at the bottom of the paddock. And it did not stop, but went on, whirr-rr-rr-rr. Dragon-flies overhead? Oh, no, for there were men's voices talking to horses. And the noise grew fainter and fainter, and, just as Gray Rabbit felt sure it was gone altogether, it grew louder and louder and louder, and came closer and closer and closer. And he squatted down as flat as he could, and kept his ears quiet, and the Thing that whirred came past him.

He heard a man talking to horses quite plainly, but he saw nothing. Then the noise died away in the distance again, and Gray Rabbit scratched his head thoughtfully, wondered over the thing that had happened, and was just going to nibble off a tuft of young clover when—whirr-rr-rr—he heard the Thing coming again. And again the sound grew fainter, and again it grew louder, and came closer and closer and passed. And Gray Rabbit saw the top of a man go by: he was high up in the air and moved slowly past, whirring all the time. This was even more wonderful. Gray Rabbit had never, all the number of times he had peered out from among tall grass at men passing by, on foot, on horses and in carts, seen anything like this man who sat in the air and whirred as he went along. Never.

Just then Madam Pheasant came by with her head bent low. "Chuck! chuck!" she said nervously, and ten gawky young pheasants, with all their heads down, followed at her tail.

"Whither away so fast?" said Gray Rabbit jauntily, as a man of the world who had seen things in his time, "Is the sky falling?"

"Chuck! chuck!" said the pheasant in

an agitated, hurried way, and the last of the ten gawky youngsters disappeared from his view.

"Always *was* a silly old mollicoddle," said Gray Rabbit, taking a mouthful of grass, just to assure himself that he was not getting nervous. "I wonder what she's in such a fright about?"

But he sat where he was. Experience had taught him in all previous dangers that sitting still until compelled to run was always the safest thing to do. And he heard the noise rising and falling far away, and then it came closer and grew louder, and the man in the air went by again. And this time Gray Rabbit thought he saw the top of a horse in front of the man.

But the Thing went away again just as before, and his spirits as before began to revive, and the larks came running through the grass past him.

"Whither away?" said he quite bravely, "is the sky falling?"

But the larks said nothing: they ran a little further, chirping, so it seemed, very sadly, and then flew up into the sky, and Gray Rabbit saw them flying round and round, but neither of them was singing.

"That's odd," thought he, "for the larks have a nest full of young ones near the edge of the meadow."

And whirr-rr-rr came the Thing again, and a young rabbit, nearly out of its wits with fright, came creeping along. And Gray Rabbit felt quite glad of the company, even of so small a bunny. So he said, "Stop, stop, where are you going? What are you frightened at?" And the little one, who had great respect for the oldest inhabitant, stopped.

"Listen," it whispered. Whirr-rr-rr came the Thing.

"Oh!" said the old one, "that's nothing. I've heard it ever so often this morning, and though it comes it always goes away again. There's a man"—and he suddenly stopped. For this time he

could see quite plainly there was a man sitting on something and driving two horses, who nodded their heads at every step. And Gray Rabbit could see that their manes and tails were long, and looked as if they had been bleached by sun and rain. He saw too, that as the man passed, the hay between himself and the man grew much thinner: indeed, he could see now right across the meadow to the hedge. He heard, too, another sound that he had not heard before, a whispering, lisping sound in the grass that went by with the man.

"There," said he to the small bunny, "I told you it would go away. All you have to do is to lie quite quiet and do nothing, and things will go away—most of them."

And the small bunny thanked him gratefully, and seeing Gray Rabbit scratch his ear with a hind foot—just to show that he did not allow miraculous occurrences to make any difference in his ordinary conduct—took heart of grace and scratched its ear too.

So there they sat, the little rabbit in the shadow of its reverend relative, just behind the big one, and listened to the rising and falling of the sound in the ups and downs of the sloping meadow. And listening, they became aware that it was again coming up to them, and the whirr-rr grew louder and louder and louder. The small rabbit could not, for the life of it, help sitting up just a little, and looking at the Thing as it came along.

How slowly it moved! and the horses bobbed their heads at every step, and whisked their tails, and, strange to say, the hay, as the horses passed, bowed down and lay flat. The bunny could see that the meadow was all empty in front of it, and still the Thing came on, never changing the tone of its voice, and the horses bobbed at every step. It was very solemn, the little rabbit thought, and very exciting.

And Gray Rabbit saw everything, too, but besides the man and the horses he heard, coming along through the grass, the same hissing noise he had heard the last time. He could not understand it, but it was a very suspicious sound, and perplexed him. So he laid his ears flat along either side of his head and got his feet well up under him, so as to be ready to make his famous jump at the first sign of danger. And the hissing noise came nearer and nearer and nearer. How thin the grass was getting! how— Something touched his fur! And

the little bunny saw its great grandsire make a motion as of jumping when—
blip!

Gray Rabbit's head went off all by itself! And the hay bowed down and lay flat, covering up its body.

And a great fear, out of all proportion to the size of its little person, seized upon the bunny and it fled. What had happened to Gray Rabbit it never knew, for before next hay time it died from a sudden attack of Bang-Bang, and so it never had another chance of seeing a hay-making machine.

The Contemporary Review.

Phil Robinson.

THE QUESTION.

You on the hills, I in the valley dwell.
You seek the highest peaks; from time to time
Baffled, and wounded, to our quiet dell
You come to gather strength anew to climb
Past shimmering crevasse and icy fell.
And I am happy, though myself I tell
That saying *Welcome* I have said *Farewell*.

You will not cease from climbing till you die.
Valleys are kind and green, and full of peace,
And here there are no echoes to bid cease
Because they mock your laughter or your cry.
And yet the valley friendships you put by
For the white hills whose heads behold God nigh.
The hills are cold: and hot of heart am I.

But I am of the valleys, and I know
That you are of the mountains. Though perchance
You drink of shallow brooks where sunbeams dance,
We cannot quench your drouth for yonder snow
Whose avalanches drown my Yes with No,
That, having held, will never let you go,
Although you be above it or below.

I am a gentian. But a little way
Beyond the reach of timid hands I grow.
Your hands might pluck me, dearest, but I blow
And wither for myself day after day,
And watch my fair blue petals growing gray.
If I were edelweiss, love, would you stay
To win and wear me, and then cast away?

Leisure Hour.

Nora Hopper.

THE PERISHING LAND.*

TRANSLATED FOR THE LIVING AGE FROM THE FRENCH OF RENE BAZIN.

IV.

AMONG FRIENDS.

"Rosette," said her father, when she came in to help her sister prepare dinner, "you will not eat with us to-day, nor for several days to come. Honest girls, like Eleanore, would be ashamed, and so should we all, to sit down beside a creature who could bestow her affection on a miserable Boquin! A proper kind of match for you, indeed! A lad from nobody knows where, without so much as a wardrobe to set up housekeeping! Let him marry a servant-wench in his own country. We want none such in the Marais, and I've had enough of taking them into my service. I shall be a laughing-stock as it is! Mind your manners in future, Rosette, and for the present, get out of my sight!"

He spoke more harshly than he felt, because Mathurin had stayed talking with him for a long time after the lad left, and had communicated to the old man some of his own fierce resentment.

Marie-Rose made no answer, and did not shed a tear, but simply withdrew to her chamber. She was not thinking of dinner, either with or without her family. But she began to dress herself in her Sunday best, taking, one by one, from the wardrobe, her black gown, kilted up above the ankles, her finest embroidered pyramidal cap, held firmly on the head by a band of transparent paper, her flowered stockings, and her sabots with upturned points like the prow of a boat. She then tied loosely round her neck, which the half-low corsage of the Marais costume left ex-

posed, a blue silk scarf a few inches wide, smoothed with a little water the bands of her brown hair, wiped her red eyes, went calmly down into the court, and set off in the direction of Sallertaine.

For the first time in her life she felt that she was alone. Mathurin did not love her, François would never understand her, even André, the cavalryman, who would soon be at home, and who had always been kind to her, treated her like a child, and never addressed her quite seriously. And yet she was a woman, matured by suffering, who only wanted some one to whom she might confide her trouble. Up to that time, if any one treated her rudely or scornfully, she had felt no occasion to speak of it. The thought of Jean Nesmy had been enough to efface the unpleasant memory. But now, when it was the absence of her lover which caused her distress, her soul cried out for help, for support, and her first thought was of the sisters Michelonne.

Rosette passed the walled orchard, and skirted the Marais, her eye fixed upon the low hill of Sallertaine. Her one hope was in the Michelonne, her one regret that she was not already inside their house in the village. Their unfailing sympathy seemed to her, at this moment, a priceless thing, which she had never properly estimated. The very thought of their round, faded, smiling faces furnished her with an objective point. It seemed to her that the mere sight of the sisters, even if she said not a word, would comfort her

a little, because they were always so tender, those mild old maids; and would never jeer at a girl because her eyes were red.

It would be easy enough to approach them, because she had promised to take up her money and lend it to pay the rent. She would say, "I have come for that money, because father needs it," and if they seemed to suspect the least thing, she would tell them all—all that was weighing upon her heart, and that she felt so unequal to bearing alone.

It was now almost one o'clock. The warm air, charged with moisture, trembled visibly above the meadows, and Rosette moved rapidly. Here was the great canal and the bridge across it, and the steep, winding street, bordered by whitewashed houses with orchards behind them, which led up from the Marais. Rosette quickened her steps yet more, afraid of being hailed and stopped; for everybody in those parts knew the Lumineau. But the good folks were mostly taking their nooning, and merely bowed to her without coming out of the shade.

"Good morning, Missy! How fast you're walking!"

"Yes, I am in a hurry. One is, sometimes, you know!"

"Certainly," they answered, and she sped on. When she reached the long square that narrows toward the Church, she had no thought save of the modest dwelling squeezed into the narrow space beside it, over against the side-door, by which the faithful entered the Church on Sundays. A very little house; one window on the square, and one on the steep alley, and a flight of three steps leading to the door across the corner. Very old also, set close under the spire and the sound of its bells—as near God as possible. The Michelonne sisters had always lived there; Rosette could almost see them inside the walls, and a faint smile, a glimmer of hope came into her sad eyes, as she

mounted the steps, and paused to take breath. As she laid her finger upon the cracked thumb-piece, the door opened, and a little bell tinkled so faintly that it would almost have needed the ear of a cat to detect the sound.

But the Michelonne sisters—the millners, who made the hooded cloaks of Salertaine—were exactly like two watchful pussy-cats. At the first hint of a visitor, they always pushed apart the chairs in which they had been sitting side by side, turned their heads, and let fall into their laps the black stuff on which they had been working. They were very like one another. They had the same deep wrinkles in the rosy flesh around their sunken lips, their snub noses, and the child-like blue eyes which had a light in them that was like a perpetual smile, the reflection of sixty years of blameless living, and loving toil. There was a gleam of kindly humor in those eyes as well—a sparkle of youth, husbanded through all their years, to illumine the countenance of old age. They had suffered privation, but they had borne it together. Ever since their childhood they had sat there side by side, sewing by the light of the same window. Daylight waxed and daylight waned, but their needles still flew. For the cutting out and stitching of hoods, there was nobody to compare with them; no such knowing and expert needlewomen in Saller-taine, or Perrier, or Saint-Gervais, and they were universally beloved. From the moment it was warm enough to open the window, and set a pot of ivy-geranium with safety on the sill, every one who climbed the alley, fisherman, huntsman, horse-breeder or game-keeper called out, "Good morrow, Michelonne! How are you?" And they would answer frankly in the flute-like voices that nobody could ever tell apart.

They were always asked to the autumn evening gatherings, because they

knew more songs than any of the young people, and the Curé used to say of them, "They're the flower of my parish; it's a pity they have no seed!"

When Marie-Rose entered, they said simultaneously, without rising, Adelaide from beside the window, and Veronica from a little further away:

"Why, it's the little Lumineau! How are you, dear?"

"Sit down," said Adelaide, "you're out of breath!"

"You're not ill?" said Veronica, "your eyes are big, as though you had fever."

"Oh, no, thank you, dear aunts," answered Rosette,—she always called them so, though it would have been difficult exactly to define their relationship. "It's only that I have walked fast and am tired. I have come for the money."

The two sisters exchanged a sidelong look, both smiling at the thought of an approaching wedding. Then Adelaide, the elder, drawing her needle across her lips, as though to smooth out the lines of involuntary amusement, put the question:

"Are you going to be married?"

"Oh, no, no!" answered Marie-Rose.

"I shall marry my seat in Church and my rosary—as you have done, aunties! It is for father I want the money. He is behindhand with his rent."

She did not look her old friends in the face as she spoke thus, but gazed sadly past them into the dark part of the room, where the beds of the sisters stood side by side against the wall, while the women shook their heads and exchanged a glance which said that there was something new, all the same, in the life of Rosette. But the Michellonne sisters were even more polite than they were sympathetic. They reserved all audible expression of their common thought for their long hours of private intercourse, while Adelaide, laying aside her unfinished hood,

clasped her thin, ivory-white hands, bent her flat person, and replied gaily:

"You come at the right moment, my dear! I lent your money on interest to my nephew, the one who has all those beautiful mares down in the Marais. He's a sharp fellow, François! 'Tis only yesterday that he sold for, he won't say how much, that dappled gray filly of his, that scours the meadows like a lapwing possessed, and that all the dealers and jockeys have had their eye upon. So he's in funds and can pay up easily. How much do you want?"

"A hundred and twenty pistoles."

"You shall have them. Are you in a hurry?"

"Yes, Aunt Adelaide, I promised them for tomorrow."

"Then do you, Veronica, go to our nephew, directly. That hood can very well wait an hour."

The younger sister got up with alacrity. She was so tiny that her head, when she stood upright, came no higher than that of Marie-Rose where she sat. Shaking off the woollen threads that clung to her black apron, Veronica kissed the girl on both cheeks with a "Good-bye, Rosette! Come back tomorrow, and you will find the money here," and next instant the drowsy stillness of the hamlet was broken by the sound of her sliding footsteps upon the paved alley.

Hardly was Veronica out of sight, when Adelaide rose, came close to Rosette, and looked searchingly at her, with a quiver of anxiety in the lids of her ever bright and loving eyes.

"Little one," she said earnestly, "you are in trouble! You've been weeping! Why, you are weeping still," and her wrinkled hand closed round the girl's pink fingers.

"What is it, Rosette? Tell me—just as if I were your mother!"

Marie-Rose checked her tears, and compelled herself to speak calmly. Trembling at the touch of the old wom-

an's hand, but with a gleam in her eye, and a resolute setting of her features as though she were confronting a band of mortal enemies, she rose and said:

"They have sent away Jean Nesmy!"

"Such a good fellow to work as he? Why ever did they do that, my dear?"

"Because I love him, Aunt Michelonne! He was turned off this morning. And they fancy it is all over between us, but it is no such thing. They seem not to understand the girls of this country!"

"Well said, my little *Maratchine*!" answered Adelaide Michelonne.

"I will let them have my money; I wish to do so! But my love I will leave where I have bestowed it. It is a vow, like one's baptism. I'm not afraid of poverty. I'm not afraid of anything except his forgetting me. When he comes back—for he has promised to come—I shall go out to meet him, and nobody can stop me. If I had to cross the Marais in a punt in the time of ice and snow, and if all the girls in the town were laughing at me, and my father and my brothers bade me not, I would go all the same!"

Angrily, with her head held high, she flung against those walls, so unused to the sound of raised voices, the profession of her love and her grief. She was suffering and she thought and spoke for herself alone, her eyes fixed on vacancy, quite oblivious of the little woman beside her.

But the latter, too, had risen, and was listening with her whole frame a-quiver, so fascinated by the words of Rosette, and so completely carried out of the narrow circle of her habitual thoughts, that the calm of her countenance was quite broken up, and the humble and depressed old maid recovered memory and youth, through her absorption in the other's pain.

"You are quite right, my dear! I approve every word you say! Don't give up the man you love!"

At the sound of these words Rosette let fall her eyes upon Aunt Michelonne, and the look was a revelation. Hitherto she had never known the little creature who stood with eyes aflame, her poor rheumatic arms extended toward Rosette and trembling with emotion.

"Love him truly! All your happiness depends on it! Be patient, my Rosette, and wait for what time may bring, but never give him up! I have known those who have refused marriage in their youth, to please their fathers, and ah me! what they've had to suffer afterwards! Don't live alone! It is worse than death. I know your Jean Nesmy! You are true children of the soil, both of you, and the country hasn't many such left. And if poor old Aunt Adelaide can be of any use to you, give you shelter, help you about starting in life, oh, my dear, come to me!"

She flung her arms round Rosette, and clasped her tight to her own little black bodice; while Rosette, now that she had spoken out, let herself weep freely on Aunt Michelonne's shoulder.

For a moment the chamber was as still as the street without in the sultry noontide. Aunt Michelonne then freed herself gently from the child's embrace and approached the window, yet not so as to be seen from the street. There was a bit of the Marais visible between two neighboring roofs: a triangular section, clothed with reddish grass which appeared to stretch away to an infinite distance.

After a pause, the old woman said in a low voice: "It was Mathurin, was it not, who told on you?"

"Yes, he watches me all the time."

"You see, he is jealous! He has a spite against you!"

"What for, poor fellow?"

"Because you are young, my poor dear! He is jealous of anybody who might possibly step into the place that was his: of François, of André,—even of you. He suffers like a lost soul at

the notion of any one else managing his father's farm. Shall I tell you the whole truth?"

She pointed with her wasted hand toward the far-off Marais, where a few poplars were faintly outlined against the sky, looking no bigger than spears of wheat.

"He still thinks about that girl at Seulière."

"Poor brother!" murmured Rosette sadly. "If he thinks of her she thinks little enough about him."

"You innocent little thing," said Aunt Michelonne under her breath. "I know what I know. Beware of Mathurin, because he has drunk too deep of love to forget! And beware of Félicité Gaurrit, who is furious, because she is mistress of her own farm now, and yet she has no suitors."

Rosette opened her lips to reply, but Aunt Michelonne checked her by an up-lifted finger. There was a sound of footsteps in the alley, and the old woman picked up her work in haste, like

a child caught in some act of naughtiness by its mother. A pair of clicking sabots rounded the door-steps at the corner and passed on into the square. They were not Veronica's.

Marie-Rose had fallen back, and stood gazing at her only friend,—a timorous and fragile old woman, but with eternal youth in her heart.

The answer she had been about to make died upon her lips, and she only said, "Good-bye, Aunt Michelonne! If I need help I shall know where to come!"

"Good-bye, my little one! and look out for Mathurin and for the woman over yonder."

They said no more save with their eyes, which they held fixed on one another as Rosette slowly receded. Presently the door opened, the latch fell, and there remained in the low room only a bowed old creature, who tried to go on sewing upon her black cloth, but who could no longer see her needle.

(To be continued.)

THE PARTRIDGE CALL.

Shrill and shy from the dusk they cry,
Faintly from over the hill:
Out of the gray where shadows lie,
Out of the gold where sheaves are high,
Covey to covey, call and reply,
Plaintively, shy, and shrill.

Dies the day, and from far away
Under the evening star,
Dies the echo as dies the day,
Droops with the dew in the new-mown hay,
Sinks and sleeps in the scent of the may,
Dreamily, faint, and far.

Pall Mall Magazine.

Frank Saville.

COLONIAL MEMORIES.

BY LADY BROOME.

PART IV.

Besides the humming-birds there were many less welcome denizens of the Gardens. There were ants of every species known to even Sir John Lubbock. Parasol ants, who occasionally took a fancy to my dinner-table decorations, especially if the brilliant and beautiful *Amherstia* had been used. I have often been requested to say what was to be done with long lines of myriads of ants ascending by one leg of the dinner-table and descending by another, each carrying a good-sized bit of scarlet petal tossed airily over his shoulder! Anything so quaint as these processions of gay color, marching across the white cloth, cannot be imagined. It was a case of "Tiger in station, please arrange," and there was just as little to be done, except to give up the *Amherstia*. These ants occasionally took a fancy to the flowers on my writing-table also, but we never seriously interfered with each other. I naturally thought that the ants ate these leaves and petals, but they only chew them up, and spread them out like manure on the feeding-grounds near the nests. From this sort of cultivation a minute fungus-like growth springs, and on that they feed. So destructive are their operations that a functionary is specially retained in the Botanical Gardens to follow them up and discover and destroy the nests, which are generally at a very great distance from the scene of their labors, and I often watched with interest a lantern apparently creeping along the ground of a dark night.

What I really wanted to see was a raid of Hunter ants. I had read a fas-

cinating description in a book of early days in Trinidad, of a domiciliary visit paid to the writer's house in the country, which she and her children had hastily to vacate at earliest dawn, taking with them their pet birds and a kitten, which the slave-woman, who warned them to turn out "sharp," declared would be devoured if left behind. The Hunter ants spent the whole of that day inside the house, clearing it of every mouse, cockroach, beetle and such small deer. She describes the ants as having wings when they first appeared; but when their day of gorging was over they emerged wingless, and rested in vast dark masses in her garden. They had not touched anything except the small reptile and insect colonies, which, we must remember, were likely to flourish under the deep thatched roof of those days, long before galvanized iron or shingles from America were known. The writer goes on to say that at dawn next day she heard strange and weird screams from numerous small sea-gulls, who, in their turn, were making an excellent breakfast off the fat Hunter ants. Such scenes as these are hardly ever to be met with in these days, for the houses are so different, and more of the high woods are cleared every year. On these hillsides cocoa is grown very successfully by the small cultivator. I have often, during our excursions up the lovely, lonely valleys, within an easy drive of Port of Spain, watched the process, which seemed very primitive. The clearing appeared to entail far the most labor, in spite of as much burning as was compatible with the lush-green foliage. Banana-suckers were the first things planted round the

hole which held the young cocoa-plant to shade it; next came small trees of the "madre di cocoa," or "*bois immortel*," which are indispensable to a cocoa plantation. This tree is at all stages of its growth a very straggling one, and can give but little shade. I suspect it is chiefly valuable from its draining properties, for the fact remains that cocoa steadily declines to flourish anywhere without its "madre."

Anything so beautiful as the hill towards San Fernando in the very earliest spring, when the dense woods of "*bois immortel*" are in full blossom cannot be imagined. At sunset the whole countryside glows with a radiance which looks like enchantment, for the green effect of this beautiful tropic island then merges over those low hills into a vivid scarlet, melting away into the indigo shadows of the quick-falling dusk. Cocoa is a most beautiful crop, for the broad glossy leaves do not at all conceal the large brilliant pod, which grows in an independent manner, in twos and threes, right out of the stem of the thickest branches. At no time of year are the trees quite bare of pods, which are of various colors. I have often seen a pale green pod, a scarlet one, and a rich dark crimson or brilliant yellow pod growing quite happily side by side; of course they were all in different stages of ripeness, but that did not seem to matter at all, and cocoa-picking seems always going on.

Those drives up the valleys were always delightful, and we found that different patois seemed to be spoken in places half a mile apart, and with only a low ridge between. Up one valley a sort of spurious Spanish would be heard, up another Creole French, whilst a hybrid Hindustani was the language of a third cleft in the hills. We made great friends, however, with the different races, and the children always rushed out to greet us.

An especial beauty of those valleys

were the fire-flies and what are locally called the fire-beetles—large, hard-backed creatures with eyes like gig lamps and a third light beneath, which only shows when they fly. My ardent desire all the time I was in Trinidad was to get a specimen of a rare fire-beetle, which is said to have a luminous proboscis. I did want the beetle dreadfully, and offered frantic rewards all up the valleys for a specimen. Needless to say I was regarded more or less as a lunatic, and the carriage was often stopped either by children waving an ordinary beetle snapping violently in its efforts to escape, or by a grinning policeman who saluted and tendered me a common fire-beetle tied up in the corner of his blue pocket-handkerchief. I once tracked with infinite pains and trouble a specimen to its owner, but, alas! it was dead and half-eaten by ants.

By the last week in January the fire-flies disappear, and are not to be seen again before the heavy May rains have fallen. Then they come forth in full beauty, and it certainly is a wonderful sight as one drives home in the short gloaming, for every blade of grass holds many tiny sparkles, winking in and out with a bewildering effect. The fire-beetles chiefly haunt the lower branches of the cocoa-groves, where they look like small lamps swinging among the trees. Indeed the magnifying effect of the damp atmosphere beneath these bushes is so powerful that I often found it difficult to believe that some one carrying a lantern was not stepping down the bank towards us. I once kept some of these beetles, fed them with sugar-cane, and sprinkled them with water every day; but they soon lost their brilliancy, and I felt it so cruel to retain them in a dark prison, that I emptied them on the *Thunbergia* outside the veranda railing. One of my prettiest girl-guests used often to wear a dagger in her hair made of these fire-

beetles, ingeniously harnessed together with black thread, and they showed brilliantly amid her dark braids, even beneath the ballroom chandeliers.

Nor did any winter visitor ever see the wonderful mass and succession of flowering trees, for they do not cover themselves with sheets of brilliant blossom until after the rainy season begins. I was disappointed in the actual flowers to be found in the Gardens. Even the imported ones do not manage much of a blossom, and bulbs, etc., have to wage an incessant warfare against the all-devouring ant. It is for this reason I suspect that the flowers confine themselves to high trees, where they are safe from the ants, for they certainly make but a languid attempt to grow in the ground. In vain I steeped the seeds of my particular favorites in a strong solution of quassia. That was all very well for the actual seed, but the ants only deferred their meal until my poor little plants were a couple of inches high.

I will not dwell here on my private sentiments regarding the cockroaches, for I feel that I should pass the grounds of permissible invective if I attempted to describe my feelings towards the creatures who devoured or defaced the bindings of all my favorite books. Nothing daunts them or keeps them away; they seem to thrive and fatten on all the destructive powders of which I used to lay in large stores for their undoing. They would take the poison and the cover of my book as well, and ask for more! How can you deal with creatures who fly in at the window and run, literally, like "greased lightning?" Their fiendish cleverness must be seen to be believed; how they will dart to a knot of exactly their own color in the polished wooden floor, and lie still as death under your eyes!

Next to the cockroaches might be ranked as irrepressible torments the mole-crickets, who would not allow of

a lawn anywhere. There were some beautiful grass tennis-courts in these Botanical Gardens, costing an appalling sum to keep in tolerable order—thanks to the crickets which burrow like moles and devour like locusts and hatch out in myriads. I used often to see a small army corps of little black boys on the tennis grounds headed by tall coolies with watering-pots of strong soapsuds which they poured on the ground. This *douche* brought the mole-cricket out of his hall door in a great hurry, to be snapped up and flung into a bucket of water by the attendant imp. But it was very difficult to keep them down, even by this means, and the lawns had to be dug up and replanted constantly. It is impossible to keep the rapacious insect-world in order in a climate which, for certainly half the year, resembles an orchid-house watered and shut up for the night.

The Harlequin beetle is, no doubt, quite as destructive as his less gaudy brethren, but one forgives him a good deal, partly because of his brilliant beauty, and partly because his depredations are carried on chiefly underground. Then the shady places are always made glorious by large, slow-moving butterflies of gorgeous coloring and quaint conceit, such as transparent round windows let in, as it were, amid their brilliant markings.

Any one who fears bats should not visit "Ière, or the home of the humming-bird" (as the Indians told Sir Walter Raleigh Trinidad was called), for all sorts and conditions of bats abound. The fruit-eating variety is greatly attracted to the Botanical Gardens by the star-apple trees growing there. I always feared lest sentence should be passed against these beautiful trees with their copper beech-like foliage, on account of the bats, who, by the way, don't seem ever to eat the fruit where it grows, but always carry it off and devour it in another tree. The Vampire

bat is a great deal bigger than the ordinary bat, but mosquito netting is sufficient protection in a house, and the stables are generally guarded by galvanized wire netting, and if ordinary care is taken about not leaving stable doors open after sundown, the horses do not suffer; but when did a negro groom ever think of a detail of that sort?

It was very amusing to watch the native bees going back to their hive at dusk. I don't know how they had been persuaded to take up their abode in a box fastened against the wall of the Superintendent's office in the Botanical Gardens; but the colony was in a very flourishing condition when I was taken to view it at sundown, and had evidently established Responsible Government. The bees themselves were small and shabby, regarded as bees, and did not trouble to make more honey than enough for their daily needs; they scouted the idea of storing it, for there were lots of flowers all the year round, and no wintry weather to provide against. Their chief anxiety seemed to be to keep their hall door shut, and they were very particular on that point. When I was watching them, the great mass of the bees had already gone into the hive, and only an occasional loiterer was to be seen creeping in at a very small hole.

"Now here comes the last bee," said my companion. "Look carefully at him." So I did, and saw that the little creature was carrying a pellet of mud nearly as big as himself. It was too big to go in at the hole, so he had to break bits off; but he twice picked up some of the fragments which had fallen down, and stuffed them also into the hole. Ther he went in himself, and the Superintendent opened a sliding panel commanding a view of this hall door, at which three or four bees were busily working, blocking it up with mud pellets.

"They do that every night," I was told, "and open it the first thing in the morning." I wanted very much to know what would happen if any belated bee turned up afterwards, but the story did not say.

English bees were introduced into the island many years ago, but they have lost most of their thrifty ways, and become demoralized by the flower wealth all the year round. They also decline to be confined in hives, which I daresay, they find too hot, and so they build wherever they like. An enormous colony had settled years and years before, evidently, under the flooring of one of the cool north verandas of Government House. As long as they went in and out from outside it did not matter, but latterly they took to pervading the veranda inside and violently assaulting the passers-by. This was too much to bear often, so the house-carpenter and his mate set to work to prise up the boards of the veranda. They chose a cloudy day when the bees would be out, taking advantage of the comparative coolness, and they soon found that many boards had to come up, for the comb was thickly formed everywhere. At last all the veranda floor was up, and I certainly never saw such a sight. Yards and yards of comb! Most of it black and useless, nearly all quite empty of honey (that was for fear of the ants), and hardly any bee-bread even. When the men went away to their breakfast the orioles, who must have been watching the proceedings with deep interest, came down from the *Flamboyant* outside the window, and had a sumptuous breakfast off the immature bees. There was a terrible revenge, however, when the bees returned later, and the workmen had to retreat hastily. I found upon that occasion that silver quarter-dollars made the best salve for bee-stings.

When we first went to Trinidad our

Evening drives often led us past fields of sugar cane which seemed even then fast falling out of cultivation, and long before we left—in 1896—they had been replaced by plantations of Guinea grass, which appeared to thrive extremely well, and for which there was an excellent market in and near Port of Spain. The land was evidently worn out for sugar-cane, but answered capitally for this tall grass, on which all four-footed beasts seem to thrive.

Much has been written and preached about the terrible fondness of the West Indian negro for smart clothes; but if he had not that passion—with which the modern fine lady can well sympathize—it would be extremely difficult to get him or her to work. Why should he, in a climate where bodily exertion is very undesirable, and where food and shelter grow, so to speak, by the roadside?

They expend vast sums on their wedding festivities, at which the guests are expected to appear in perfectly new garments. I once offered a comely young black housemaid leave of absence to go to her brother's marriage, but she declined on the score of expense. Now I had seen this girl a week or two before, very smartly dressed for a friend's wedding, so I said:

"But surely you have still got that beautiful hat and frock you wore at Mélanie's marriage the other day?"

Aurelia gave me a shocked glance as she answered:

"Oh, lady, me can't wear *that*!"

"Why not?" I asked.

"All peoples very much offended if I wear same dress to their wedding; must be quite new every things."

And nothing I could urge had the least effect in shaking her resolution not to disgrace her family by appearing in garments which had done duty before on a similar occasion. I always noticed at the cathedral that every fe-

male member of the very large and devout colored congregation had on her head a hat which must have cost a good deal more than my own bonnet. From a picturesque point of view the effect of the colored women's spotlessly clean white dresses and brilliantly flowered and ribboned hats was excellent, though doubtless the political economist would have sighed. I once asked a friend where and how these smart damsels obtained their patterns, for nothing could be more correct or up-to-date than their skirts and their sleeves.

"Oh, the washerwomen set the fashions here, especially yours. It is very simple: when you send a blouse or a muslin or cotton dress to the wash—and these women wash beautifully—the laundress calls in her friends and neighbors, and they carefully study and copy that garment before you see it again; and the same thing happens with the gentlemen's tennis flannels, and other garments."

But the most amusing, and absolutely true, story I heard was this one:

Our house steward told me that, when he was superintending the moving of our numerous boxes and packages on the return from our short annual visit to England, he noticed on the wharf one of the young black men employed who was unusually active in dealing with the luggage. Nothing could be a greater contrast to the ordinary sleepy loafer, who used to smoke and talk a good deal more than he worked. This youth was strong and smiling, and made nothing of handling any big boxes which came in his way, so most travellers rewarded his good-humored exertions by an extra sixpence for himself.

A couple of years later we missed Mark from the landing jetty. No one knew what had become of him, nor could the most anxious inquiries elicit any information. At last, one day,

when my informant was in one of the principal "Stores," as the excellent and comprehensive shops of Port of Spain are called, there suddenly entered his friend Mark, smiling as ever, and still dressed in his primitive working garments of the three old sacks—two for his "divided skirts," and one with a hole cut in it for his head to go through, and worn as a sleeveless smock-frock. Before any questions could be asked, Mark took one of the assistants aside, and began to choose very carefully and deliberately an entire outfit of black cloth clothes. He evidently knew exactly what he wanted and paid for each article, as he se-

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lected it, from a roll of five-dollar notes, which, for want of a pocket, he carried in his hand. The broadcloth suit was followed by other indispensable garments, and finally a pair of lavender gloves, shining boots, a tall hat, a slender umbrella, and even a showy gilt watch-chain was purchased, and the happy possessor of a complete rig-out of "Europe clothes" left the store with only a few cents to put in his new and numerous pockets. He was often seen afterwards in this fine suit of clothes walking about the Gardens when the band was playing, but, so far as any one knows, he has never done a stroke of work since!

THE FOOLISH DOINGS OF AMY FINCH.

Miss Amy Finch and her new friend, Mrs. Bagnall, sat in the window making the most of the fading daylight. The matron, personally conducted by the spinster (whose local knowledge was naturally of great value), had just purchased at the annual cheap sale two dozen best pocket-handkerchiefs. It was obviously desirable to get them marked at once, and as Amy was justly celebrated for her ornamental letters, and had lately evolved a very prepossessing B, they turned into the spinster's room, and proceeded one to mark, and one to learn.

Tea was presently brought in by Mary, the chubby little maid-of-all-work, and while they sipped the two friends chatted in peace and gratulation. This raid had certainly been very successful. The reductions, Amy was well assured, were no commercial fiction. As recently as the week before last, eightpence halfpenny had been firmly refused for these very handkerchiefs, and the offer came from Kirk-

holm's one lady of title, who naturally expected some concession to her rank. At sevenpence three-farthings, therefore, with full allowance for the stain on one outside (which might be due to Lady Butson's gloves, or fingers) the hankeys were an unusual bargain. Nor had diplomacy denied Miss Finch a personal satisfaction. Even from the emporium door, whither she had advanced, not angry but surprised, Amy had been entreated back. "Compliments from the Fancies," said Cash, "and three-halfpence sha'n't part you." So she had got the Rhine Violets at her own price, though ready, if need must, to give the three-and-three. She had even dropped an empty envelope that she might return to the counter with self-respect, and yield in an after-thought.

The ladies had suffered some extremity from elbows and baskets, and Amy's back was so bad that at the substantial tea that would honor her friend's departure, she meant to fly to potted

ment. In all things, however, there is give and take, and the take had been a right good catch.

They sank into contemplative silence. Suddenly Mrs. Bagnall looked up and said, "Amy, did you ever have an offer?"

"No," Amy answered quite simply, "I never did."

"They say that every woman has had one chance."

"I don't know what became of mine then."

"Some other woman got two, I suppose. Were you ever at all pretty?"

Mrs. Bagnall was certainly a most uncircuitous person. But she asked her blunt questions with a chirpy innocence that almost gave her the immunity of childhood.

"Yes," said Amy, stimulated to unconventional candor; "yes, I think I was."

"Ah," Mrs. Bagnall answered, "there's no telling. One claims, after a certain age, the right to have been a beauty. It's the brevet rank we receive on retiring. Of course," she added, "one need not be pretty to be pleasing. Yours, my dear, is a very good face."

That dry and belated crumb of comfort did not content Amy.

"I wish you would believe me," she said; "I tell you I really was."

She rose and opened an old mahogany desk that stood upon the table.

"There now," she said, blushing rather prettily, "judge for yourself," and she placed a photograph in Mrs. Bagnall's hand.

It had been taken in London fifteen years ago, during Amy's historic plunge into the deeps of fashion. An early example of some permanent process, it was quite fresh and unfaded. It represented Amy in a Dolly Varden dress—the livery of a certain splendid bazar.

"Dear me," said Mrs. Bagnall, in hushed surprise. "What owls the men

must have been! You were a lovely child—absolutely lovely."

"I certainly was pretty," Amy answered. "But you know there were troubles. Papa got into difficulties . . . and I had a long illness . . . and they made me wear glasses . . . and . . . it's all fifteen years ago. What with one thing and another—well, you see what happened."

Amy dropped a curtsy and laughed, but her spectacles grew misty all the same. She stooped down and poked the fire.

"My dear," said Mrs. Bagnall, "you are very well as you are. And what, after all, are looks? Good looks do not make good people. We must not look at looks."

At this point the maid fell in with the lamp, and Mrs. Bagnall became conscious of urgent claims at home.

"Come again tomorrow," said Amy, as she kissed her bosom-friend, "and we'll go on with the marking."

The photograph lay upon the table. Amy took it up and looked upon it long. Then, moved by what thought who shall say?—in farewell or in assertion of identity still maintained: in sad surrender or in sadder clinging—Amy brought a pen and on the white border of the picture inscribed her name. Her calligraphy was her greatest accomplishment. It suggested, as calligraphy sometimes does, delicacy and grace, which Amy's voice and presence quite failed to convey. More often than not handwriting is a mere misfit, belying all the contours of character. Once in a way it is their very essence and distillation. It expresses the soul as does the tremendous allegory of an Eastern faith the astral body—that body which is a man's veriest self, the fabric of all his deeds and dreams and desires.

Having thus impressed her sign-manual upon the old portrait, Amy put it away, and clearing her mind of cobwebs, took out the potted meat.

The next day when Mrs. Bagnall returned to the charge upon the pocket-handkerchiefs she noticed something unusual in Amy's manner. It was nothing very striking—only a kind of half-abstraction, and, once and again, the hovering of an inward smile.

"Amy," said Mrs. Bagnall, when her friend had lapsed into silence with her needle threatening society in the thickness of an unfinished B, "there is something on your mind. Are you in love?"

Amy started. "What do you mean?" she said, blushing a little.

"Dear me!" exclaimed her friend. "I meant with your own picture; but really, my dear, I shall think it is with somebody else's."

"I was going to ask you a question," Amy said after a short pause, "but I think I sha'n't now."

Mrs. Bagnall applied the expected degree of cajolery, and Amy drew from a drawer a postal wrapper.

"It is mere curiosity," she said, "but should you call this a lady's or gentleman's hand?"

"Oh, a lady's—no, a gentleman's. Really, I could not be sure. It's a very pretty hand, anyhow. Dear me, Amy! how interesting. Would it be discreet to ask how the correspondence began?"

"Oh, it is not a correspondence at all. We arranged an exchange of papers through the 'Bazar.' She—"

"Oh, Amy, don't let the romance ooze away like that."

"Well, then, the person. The person sends me Black and White in return for the Graphic. The only thing that matters is the address. It would be very awkward to write Mrs. H. Austin if it really were a gentleman."

"You must be satisfied with H. Austin."

"But that sounds rude."

"Oh, never mind," said Mrs. Bagnall. "It will goad him on to declare himself."

"Really, Emily," answered Amy, as

she rose and secreted the wrapper, "What things you do say."

"My dear," said Mrs. Bagnall, "I only meant his identity."

From that time forward Miss Finch's *ami inconnu* became a favorite theme of delicate banter.

Messages were intrusted to Amy to be faithfully given when next she was writing to Henry, Hubert, Hugh, or Harold. The postman was made accessory to much circular archness relating to furnishing and to continental tours. Volumes containing respectively "Mr. H." and "The Lang Coortin" were pressed upon Amy's perusal. Altogether she enjoyed quite an Indian summer of matrimonial allusion.

It must not be thought that any vulgar publicity attached to these proceedings. They were esoteric and discriminating, and strictly kept from masculine profanation.

It happened one afternoon, however, that Mrs. Sedgwick, having occasion to despatch her son Augustus to Amy's rooms with a basket of Jerusalem artichokes—a present wherewith she was wont inexpensively to promote the gaiety of her friends—thought it would greatly heighten the humor of a sly innuendo to make the innocent youth her medium. Articled clerks, in Mrs. Sedgwick's view, were exceedingly innocent. Mind you she was not so confident about solicitors.

"Bring back the basket," she said, "and give her my dear love; and I wish she would lend me Byron's enigma on the letter H. Say it begins,

'It was whispered in heaven.'"

"It is not Byron's," said Gus, "it is Miss Fanshawe's. But what's the point of the allusion?"

"Goodness!" exclaimed his mother, amazed at the learning and acuteness that she had evoked—"What is the boy talking about?"

"Why, the handle is tied up with

string," said Gus inconsequently; "really mother, I think this mission would be better discharged after nightfall. However, as you please."

With good-natured disgust the lad took up his mother's bounty and departed.

Asked to wait in Amy's room (while the maid threw the artichokes away) Augustus looked round for means of amusement. On the table lay the works of Charles Lamb. He took the book up, and it opened at "Mr. H.." "Ah," he thought "H. again. There's a mystery about this. More is meant than meets the—halloa!"

Gus's eye fell upon a postal wrapper whereon the address was hardly dry. It lay upon a Graphic which had been rolled up, and then allowed to uncurl. It was obviously designed for the post. The address, in Amy's beautiful hand, was, "H. Austin, The Nest, Ripon."

"Oh, ho!" said Gus. "This lets the cat out of the bag. Good old Amy. What a lark. The Nest, too! That beats Jerusalem artichokes. Go in and win, Amy, and you'll have the little teapot that's spolling in mother's box, and live very happy ever—"

Again the lad's meditation was cut off short. Half-hidden under a little lady-like inkstand there lay a photograph.

"The plot thickens," he said, and dragged the thing out.

"Well, I'm shot!" exclaimed Augustus, as he recognized the face. "I never suspected that old Amy had been a beauty in her day. If only I had been twenty years earlier in the field, I should have lost my heart. Where were the men's eyes, I wonder?"

He was just about to return the portrait to its lurking-place when a thought leaped into his brain. Slightly curving the photograph, that it might not resist the rolling that would follow, he slipped it into the heart of the Graphic, and turned away from the

table. Miss Finch, hurrying in a moment later with the empty basket, found him studying intently "The Monarch of the Glen."

"How kind of your mother," said Amy. "But she must not rob herself, you know."

"Oh, don't be afraid," Gus answered. "Mother is very honest in that way. She gave me a message for you, Miss Amy—it was—something about—never mind! you can ask her to-morrow."

And rather red and confused, Gus made for the door.

"Oh dear," said Amy, "he has forgotten the basket. I must take it up this afternoon, I suppose. How queer he was about the message."

Conscience had made a coward of the artiled clerk. Any reference to the letter H seemed like confession of the Graphic's secret enclosure.

That evening the young fellow encountered Miss Amy at the post-office. She was forcing into the box a stubborn and protracted roll. As he raised his hat he reddened again, and felt an inward questioning.

"Practical people," he said, "should be kept out of the joke department."

It was almost an epigram, and he made a note of it.

Two days later Amy Finch stepped into Mrs. Bagnall's drawing-room with the look of a woman walking in her sleep.

"Emily," she said, "am I mad? Read this, and tell me."

"Well," said Mrs. Bagnall, when in silence, save for inaudible ejaculations, she had extracted the essence of a four-page letter, "that depends on the answer you mean to give."

"Then it is—it really is—what it seems to be?"

"That again depends. If it seems to be an offer of marriage, there is no doubt it is what it seems. 'Hubert Austin.' You see I was right. Oh, Amy, I am so glad."

"But, Emily, it is so sudden, so strange altogether."

"Why, you poor little thing, you are shaking like a leaf. Sit down here and I'll rub your silly cold hands. Why, I daresay it is not so sudden as you make out. How long have you been writing to one another?"

"We have never written a word except our mutual address—I mean our two addresses. The most that ever we have done has been to mark a passage that we liked."

"All about love, of course."

"You know, Emily, I wouldn't do anything of the kind. I should not have gone so far as I did . . . it was only criticism of books . . . if I had known for certain that it was a man."

"Well, you know now," said Mrs. Bagnall, "and that is enough. Of course you saw the line written across?"

"No," answered Amy. "What does it say?"

"Oh," said Mrs. Bagnall, "nothing of any importance, only, 'I shall arrive tomorrow at 12.30.'"

"Oh, dear, dear," said Amy, with tears in her eyes, "what shall I do?"

"First," said Mrs. Bagnall, "you will take a glass of sherry and a slice of cake. And then you and I will walk back to your house. Why, bless you, if you had only refused them once and twice a day as I used to do in India, you would not worry yourself about an offer."

"Then I suppose I must refuse him, you think?"

"My dear," said Mrs. Bagnall, "we are not in India, and . . . we'll see. Give the poor man a hearing; I tell you, we'll see."

So they went to Amy's room and waited.

The knock came. Then Mrs. Bagnall pressed her friend's hand and withdrew upstairs.

"Mr. Austin," said the maid, with

awful curiosity rounding her eyes, and there stepped into the room a young man of twenty-eight or so. A pleasant-faced fellow, frank and kindly; a gentleman all over.

The room was dark under the brightest conditions, and that was a day of cloud. Amy, sitting at its farthest extremity, was only dimly visible from the doorway.

"Forgive me," said the young man, as, hardly sure of his way, he advanced slowly; "I ought to have prepared you. Say that you forgive me."

He stood, and tossing away his cap, held out his two hands.

Trembling and in silence Amy came to meet him. But there was such generous sweetness in the impulsive face as made her feel that she should not long be afraid. She put her hands into his, and let her eyes fall. Then she felt the hands that held hers close with a convulsive clasp.

She looked up, and fancied that the young man's face had grown a little pale. Then, before she could say anything, before she could even think anything, Austin was pleading his cause, as ardently as the most exacting maiden could desire.

"Amy," he said, "it is not so sudden as it seems. I believe in impulse. Impulse is a pigeon flying home, and reason is a blind man tapping on the pavement in a strange street. But I have not trusted impulse alone."

"Why, what could you know about me?" Amy said.

"Oh, almost everything," he answered. "Your handwriting told me a great deal. I have studied graphology, and a letter is like a living presence to me. As I read it I hear the tones of the voice and see the changes of the face. But your writing, Amy!—It is a perfect revelation of yourself. If you want to keep your secrets you must employ a secretary."

"Do you really think that?" Amy

asked in some alarm. "Not, of course, that I have any secrets."

"Oh you must not take me quite literally. But in soberest truth there is a singularly personal quality in your hand. It has a perfume of its own. It made me think of violets."

"I daresay," Amy remarked. "Rhine violets."

"No, no, it was purely spiritual suggestion. As a matter of fact I hate the smell of violets—you might as well put mud upon your handkerchief."

"Oh dear," said Amy, "I got a new bottle to-day!"

"Why do you say 'Oh dear?' From this time forth you will not smell of violets, but violets will smell of you."

"I don't like compliments," said Amy, unsuspecting of a plagiarism from Herick.

"When the truth is a compliment you must learn to bear it. But, Amy, it was not only your writing that made me love you. You talked to me in little crosses with blue pencil. I never knew such judgment as yours. You drink the spirit of a book like wine."

"I never drink wine," said Amy. "All our family were abstainers."

"Yes, yes," Austin answered; "but that is not the point now. You are the very pope of critics, and infallible whether you speak from chair or sofa. That made me love you, Amy—your amazing literary instinct—for good books are my life-blood. I want to write a good book myself. You will help me, won't you?"

"Oh dear," said Amy, "I am very slow and dreadfully shallow."

"It is at your slow and shallow feet—"

"Oh, my feet are well enough," said Amy.

"Yes, yes; but figuratively. Let me sit at the feet of a good woman while the critics snarl and wrangle. I believe in the wisdom of the pure heart."

"I think you are very impulsive," Amy said, after a momentary pause.

"Did I not begin by confessing that? But I have shown you that I am calculating, too."

"I think . . . if I were to . . . you would be sorry by-and-by . . . I have no money, except . . ."

"Money! If I had been a fortune-hunter do you suppose I should have made no inquiry?"

"I only wanted you to know how things are. And then I am older than you—a great deal older, I should think." Amy hesitated for a moment, and then went on with a little gulp of difficult resolution. "My birthday will be on Tuesday, and I shall be—"

"Don't tell me," Austin broke in, "I won't hear;" his fingers went up to his ears—"positively and absolutely I won't. Amy, your present shall be the engagement-ring."

"Nonsense," said Amy, "I will save you from your own rashness. Besides I shall want a long time to think."

Yet on Tuesday the ring came—and stayed. For the two young people had met many times, and Mrs. Bagnall and Mrs. Sedgwick, having made searching inquiry, both of the lover himself, and also of lawyers, bankers, and a clergyman or two, had with one voice delivered their judgment.

"Amy," this emphatic pronouncement ran, "if you don't say 'Yes,' an asylum is your place."

So the engagement was announced, and Kirkholm almost lost its head. Never since Carry Whitworth "went off" with that disreputable reporter had there been such talk. Excitement and tea ran high. Scones and wigs and apple-cake, pairs of fowls and ham with pink frills, made the hospitable tables groan—possibly also one of the guests.

But, groaning or gay, Mr. Austin made an excellent impression. He gave himself no airs, professed his devotion

to wigs, admired the neighboring scenery, and was exactly enough in love.

During this period the behavior of Gus Sedgwick excited some remark; not a great deal, for Mr. Austin and Amy Finch were as much as most people could manage. His mother, however, and Mrs. Whitworth observed and denounced him. He sat where he could watch the affianced pair, and chuckled. Now, as his affectionate friends justly remarked, that was not the way for a young man to behave.

In a month the festivities were over, and life paled down to its cold and normal gray. The tables lost their rosy frills: Mr. Austin was back at Ripon. Mrs. Whitworth had neuralgia.

But Amy! Oh, it was worth one's while to look at Amy. Her month of life had been put back. If this was not April come again, surely it was a time almost as fair, and tenderer and sweeter. The record of the pinching years seemed half erased. The hard and prim little lines softened into gracious curves. Her hair, always rich and beautiful, caught a ripple and a gleam. Her light-gray eyes grew dark and full of dreams. Her very figure ripened.

Gus Sedgwick ceased to chuckle. He gazed at Amy still, but he gazed in a kind of awe. So might the conjurer gaze from whose apparatus of deceit had sprung in very deed a gracious miracle. During Austin's stay, this singular change in Amy had been less obvious. Perhaps excitement overlaid it. Perhaps it needed time to strike its roots into the heart before it blossomed in the lips and eyes. Looking at Amy now, many a portly bachelor fluttered his watch-chain with a sigh, and said, "How blind I must have been!"

So time went on and there was talk about the wedding—not as an event urgent and imminent, but as of something that was surely stealing on. Already Mrs. Sedgwick's tea-pot had ar-

rived, thoroughly scoured, not to say scratched, and bearing this inscription: "Humble, I know dearest Amy, but let me be the *first*."

It was in the late spring, when the engagement was about six months old, that Austin came to pay his second visit. Possibly he came to make arrangements for the great event. At any rate Mrs. Whitwell leaped to that conclusion and a lacquered card-tray. Perhaps one should say *the* lacquered card-tray, for it was a well-known feature of Kirkholm commerce. Amy had asked its price at three successive sales, and had really meant to buy it when it had come down another rung or two.

One day Amy, instigated by Mrs. Bagnall, gave her lover a little dinner. That friend was the only other guest, but still anxieties were deep and pitfalls many. There was the cracked soup-plate, and there was the landlady's temper, and there were Mary's thumbs. But all these difficulties were negotiated or surmounted. It really was going to be a very nice little dinner. Mrs. Lewthwaite (so was the landlady named) had come out with unexpected gusto. The dining-room, which she had generously lent, did exceedingly well. Mr. Lewthwaite's slippers were not obvious, and when it was certain that his lady would not be looking in again, Amy would run up and whip away the white embroidery antimacassars.

* * * * *

It was done. All was perfect, except the smell of baked plates.

* * * * *

It was over. Nothing could have been better. If Mary *had* nudged to call attention to things that she was handing, that was an hospitable weakness.

Austin had been left to the enjoyment of the claret over a cigarette.

"Yes, and he did enjoy it, too," said Mrs. Bagnall, who had presented the

wine and the salmon. "It was good, though I say it."

So there was a delightful flutter of congratulation while Amy began to think about the tea.

Suddenly she remembered something. Hubert had asked her to sew a button on his glove: the glove would be in his coat pocket: she would get the thing done ready for his return.

With a strange sense of daring intimacy, Amy felt about in the many-pocketed masculine garment. Pockets, pockets everywhere, yet not a glove to . . . Yes; here it was. No! another cigarette-case—or might it be a receptacle for gloves? There seemed to be no other possible lurking-place. She took the slender case into her hands, and glanced within its compartments.

A photograph. Well, she was not jealous; but whose picture did he carry about?

Not hers anyhow, for Hubert had never wished to have it taken.

She must look.

Guiltily, yet not without a sort of inward justification, Amy took the photograph out and held it up to the hissing hall-light.

It was her own picture—that picture which, seven months ago, had so mysteriously disappeared.

How on earth had it come into Hubert's possession?

At first Amy's mind had room for nothing but that wonder.

Then the beauty of her own face mastered her, filling her with memories and wistful dreams.

And then—swift and sure as a shaft of light—the truth smote into her heart.

Some one had sent Austin her picture, and he had fallen in love with that. And when, for the first time, he saw her living face, desecrated by the trampling feet of fifteen pitiless years, he had felt the keenest stab of disappointment. That momentary falling of his countenance and that swift recov-

ery had told all the story. A very tragic comedy had been acted within two beats of the heart.

How gallantly, how chivalrously, he had behaved! Amy loved him better than she had ever loved him yet, now that it was borne in upon her heart that Hubert did not love *her*. How plainly the road which had been traversed with undistinguishing eyes unrolled itself before her now! In that cocoon of self-beguilements, whereby Hubert, intent at first on cheating only her, had finally all but cheated himself, she saw the spinning of every thread. When he looked upon the faded original of the picture, he had felt with instinctive nobility that one thing must be done. The ill-fruit of his romantic folly must be gathered by him alone. The woman must not eat of its bitter ashes.

Never to tell her; not to let her know.

That line from Hubert's beloved Enoch Arden, upon which his voice always seemed to tremble and break, rose naturally in Amy's mind.

He was so completely saturated with Tennyson, that his resolution, Amy thought, might have shaped itself to that piteous refrain.

Sometimes the rôle had been difficult acting; sometimes he had lost himself in his part; but he had never loved her. Well, the last lines would soon be spoken, and the lights put out.

"Oh," thought poor, desolated Amy, "if for one hour he had loved me I could have borne it better. But the girl whom he loved was dead long ago. I was only her ghost. When he wanted to be fond of me, he had to read the picture into my face."

"Amy," came a voice from the stairs, "what on earth are you about? Mr. Austin and I are abusing one another like pickpockets; come and make peace . . . and tea."

"All right," Amy answered. "I had to

do something." She replaced the picture and the case. Then she moistened her lips and hummed a little tune, and ran lightly upstairs.

Act? Why, if it came to that, women could act as well as men. Better perhaps; God help them!—they had more practice.

"Amy," said Mrs. Bagnall, "we are quarrelling over Enoch Arden. Was he a hero or a fool?"

"Both," said Amy; "good men always are."

"Dear me!" remarked Mrs. Bagnall, "how epigrammatic some folks are! Let us run downstairs, Mr. Austin, and come back clever."

All through that sleepless night, salt with tears, acrid with humiliation, Amy groped her way toward a resolution. It was not the resolution to give her "lover" up, for that had been taken on the instant of discovery.

The mode of emancipation was the difficulty; for her slave would most certainly refuse his freedom. All his chivalry and all his self-delusion would urge him to make jewels of his chains.

"Never to tell him; not to let him know." Enoch Arden's resolution was capable of feminine adoption. She must save Hubert from the teeth of that remorse which would prey upon the knowledge of her knowledge.

But how was the thing to be done?

Happily—for to Amy's direct and unimaginative nature the burden of duplicity was heavy to bear—Austin was leaving Kirkholm the next day. To send him away without decisive settlement of the wedding-time was natural enough.

In that matter, to be indefinite is to be maidenly.

During the hours of their last evening she did not betray herself. Pale-ness and a few tears became the occasion well enough. When next day Amy waved from the platform, her lover

never divined what gave the fluttering handkerchief its little touch of tragedy.

As soon as the sharpest need for deception was over, Amy's part was poorly played. At first her friends believed that Hubert's departure might well account for the pale cheeks and swollen lids. But very quickly it became evident that something had gone wrong.

Good little Mrs. Bagnall burrowed gallantly towards the core of the mystery, but, somehow or other, always missed the way. There had been no quarrel; the engagement held, and Amy was only a little worried; and Mrs. Bagnall could not help her—save by leaving her alone. But Gus Sedgwick, as often as the chance occurred, stared at Amy. He did not chuckle, but often whistled between his teeth—a meditative whistle.

One day, a month after Austin's departure, Augustus poured into a basket a quart of gooseberries, designed for the morrow's tart at home, and slipped out by the back-door. The basket, he hoped, would give him the *entrée* of Amy's room, and there was something that he must say to her.

His plan succeeded. Amy came in looking so white and fragile, so weary and old, that Gus's heart bled for her. "I am so much obliged," she said, holding out her hand, and calling up the ready piteous smile. "What beautiful—"

"Hang the gooseberries," interrupted Gus. "Miss Amy, I can't bear to see you like that. I once thought I had done such a mighty clever thing, and now—I wish I'd cut my hand off first."

"Oh Gus," said poor Amy, forgetting her own trouble for a moment at the sight of the lad's distress, "you have not been betting again?"

"No," said Gus, "didn't I promise? Oh, Miss Amy, it was I who shoved it in. Just for a lark, you know, in the 'Mr. H.' days."

"Shoved what?" asked Amy, too much puzzled to reject the vulgar word.

"Why, the picture, Miss Amy—the confounded—I mean the beautiful picture."

"Oh, Gus," said Amy, pressing her hands together, "was it you? I think I must sit down for one moment. I don't feel quite well."

In a moment Gus was on his knees at her feet.

"Miss Amy," he blurted out, with many sniffs and gulps, "I know all about it. You've had a regular bust-up, and he has chucked you, and it is breaking your heart."

"No, no," said Amy, "you are quite wrong."

"Bosh," answered Gus: "you don't gammon me. It's just killing you; why, your hand"—he caught it in his own—"is like an egg-shell. Well, look here; as soon as I've got money for the fare, I'll go to Ripon and horsewhip the beastly sweep. I will, I swear I will; so that's settled. And now, Amy, this is what matters most. Don't you cry. There are other fellows besides him. Amy—I don't mind a bit: upon my word, I don't—I'll marry you."

For the first time during many days Amy's eyes brightened with a smile. Forgetting her propriety, she laid her hand on Gus's hair.

"Thank you, Gus," she said; "you are a dear good boy."

"I suppose you'll like it to be soon?" he asked stoutly, if a little ruefully.

The Leisure Hour.

"Well, no," she answered; "I am deeply grateful, Gus, but I think I cannot—"

Her speech broke off. The merriment in her eyes changed into resolution.

"Gus," she said, "I accept your offer—"

"All right," said Gus, buttoning up his coat. "Upon my word, I don't mind."

"So far as this. I will be engaged to you for one week."

"What's the good of that?" said Gus. "Blest if I understand."

"Don't try," said Amy. "But, believe me, you will render me a great service."

Suddenly a keen look flashed out of the lad's eyes.

"You are going to humbug Austin," he said. "It is you who want to break it off."

"Yes," she said solemnly, "I want to break it off."

"Why, Miss Amy?" he asked, moved by her manner. "Tell me why."

"Because I love him, Gus; because I love him."

"Don't tell me any more," said Gus, reddening and turning away.

Then he advanced to Amy with a soft brightness in his eyes.

"Not because of our week's engagement," he said, "but . . . for other reasons . . . will you give me one kiss?"

Amy threw her arms around him, and cried as though her heart would break.

Frederick Langbridge.

THE ALCALDE WHO WAS A CHARCOAL-BURNER.*

I.

Another day I will narrate the tragic events that preceded the entrance of

the French into the Moorish town of Guadix, in order that it may be seen how its infuriated inhabitants maltreated and killed the mayor, Don Francisco Trujillo, who had been accused of not having dared to go out to face the

*Translated for *The Living Age* by Jean Raymond Bidwell.

French army with his three hundred countrymen, armed with guns, swords, knives and slings.

To-day, with no other purpose than to indicate the state in which affairs were when the heroic episode, to which I am about to refer occurred, I will say that his Excellency, the *Señor Conde* Don Sebastiani, as the traitors called him, was Captain General of Grenada. The governor of the district of Guadix was General Godinot, successor to the Colonel of Dragoons, Monsieur Corbineau, who had the glory of occupying the city on the 16th of February, 1810.

Two months had passed since that detested date and Napoleon's troops continued to maintain good order in Guadix, and that town, famous for revolt and guerilla warfare, was already as quiet as a pool of oil. One scarcely even saw a good patriot hanging from the balcony of the town hall. The populace began to jabber French, and even the children knew how to say "didon" in speaking of the conquerors, which was a clear indication that the assimilation of the Spanish and French had made great progress. This led the dwellers beyond the Pyrenees to hope for a speedy union of the two countries. Already the grandmothers danced (the grandmothers of the grandsons of traitors, not mine, thank heaven!) they danced, I say with the conquering officers of Marengo, Austerlitz and Wagram, and it is said that some idle beauty had even looked with kindly eyes at this or that grenadier, dragoon or hussar born in distant lands.

All public documents of the reign of Fernando VII. had the following note added, "Preserved for the reign of our king, *Señor* Don José Napoleon I." Those sons of Voltaire and Rousseau deigned to hear mass on Sundays and feast days, although the generals and superior officers listened, like atheists of the highest rank, lolling upon the

chairs in the chancel and smoking huge pipes. The friars of San Agustín, San Diego, Santo Domingo and San Francisco had consumed all the sacred Host and had been driven from their convents in order that the latter might serve as quarters for the Gauls. In fact, all was peace, official joy and enthusiasm, under penalty of death, in the old court of those enemies of Christ, who reigned in Guadix by the grace of Allah and his prophet Mahomet.

II.

Under these circumstances, the butcher of Guadix was obliged to close his doors because there were no more beasts to kill. The cows, oxen, calves, sheep, lambs and goats,—in fact, all the live stock of the territory had been devoured by those foreigners, besides all the hams, turkeys, chickens, fowls, pigeons and tame rabbits of the city, for no one had ever before seen human beings eat so much.

The country people, always frugal, kept on eating vegetables, raw, boiled or fried. But the conquerors needed meat—fresh meat, a good deal of it and that right soon.

In this dilemma, the French general remembered that the district of Guadix was made up of numerous towns, and that the greatest part of them were as yet unsubdued.

"It is necessary," he said to his troops, "that the protection of the Empire be extended throughout the country. March into all the cities, villages and farms under my command. Take them the good news of the arrival of Don José I. upon the throne of San Fernando. Take possession of them in his name, and bring me, upon your return, all the live stock that you find in their corrals and sheepfolds. Long live the Emperor!"

In obedience to this order, there

marched ten or twelve columns of two hundred men each, in the direction of the Marquisate of Zenet, towards Gor, Los Montes and the towns situated upon the northern slope of the Sierra Nevada mountains. Among the latter—and here we have the episode to which I referred when I took up my pen to-day,—nestling at the foot of the lofty snowy Mulhacem, lay the very old town of Lapeza, famed twenty leagues around for the indomitable character of its inhabitants, their Arabic appearance and half savage customs. It was celebrated in the Moorish wars, and its half ruined castle still brings to mind the name of its valliant governor, Bernadino de Villalta, a worthy adversary of the followers of Aben-Humeya.

It was the 15th of April in the year 1810. The town of Lapeza presented a strange appearance on that day: an appearance both ridiculous and grotesque, and yet capable of inspiring admiration and terror. Every approach to the town was shut off by a barricade of the trunks of oaks and other gigantic trees that the entire population had brought down from the neighboring hills; and with them they had made barricades not easily surmounted. As the greater part of the neighborhood was composed of charcoal-burners, and the remainder of wood-choppers and shepherds, this work was accomplished with an intelligence and celerity truly astonishing.

This stout wall of wood formed a kind of tower across the road leading from Gaudix, on the outskirts of the town. Upon this tower the people of Lapeza had placed a formidable cannon, constructed by themselves from a huge trunk of oak which had been hollowed out by fire, bound with strong ropes and doubled wire. It was loaded to the muzzle with pounds of powder, a great number of bullets, stones, pieces of old iron and other projectiles of that sort. There were gathered here

all the available arms of the village, consisting of a dozen muskets, more than twenty blunderbusses, a knife, dagger or razor for each person, three or four dozen wood axes, huge piles of good-sized stones, and a veritable forest of cudgels and heavy-knobbed sticks.

As to the garrison, all contemporaries agree that there were about two hundred men. They could be called men only by excess of courtesy, because they seemed more like orang-outangs. Among the foremost in rank, deserving special mention, and one who gives an exact idea of the others, was the General of the Army, the Governor and the Alcalde of Lapeza, Manuel Atienza. Long may he rest in glory! He was highest in authority in the town, a man between forty-five and fifty years of age, tall as a cypress, raw-boned or gnarled (that is the true word) as an ash tree, and as strong as an oak. To tell the truth, his long employment as a charcoal-burner had so burned and blackened him that he looked more like an oak turned to charcoal. His finger-nails were like flint, his teeth like mahogany and his hands of bronze. His hair, disordered and filled with straw, was like undressed hemp both in quality and color. He had the neck of a wild boar. His breast, exposed by the unbuttoned shirt from shoulder to shoulder, seemed covered with horse-hide that had become wrinkled and hardened over the red-hot coals, and the bristly hair on his chest, and his heavy eyebrows as well, had been scorched and singed. This was because the Señor Alcalde was a charcoal-burner or a farmer of the hills, as they called themselves, and had spent all his life in the midst of a fire, like the souls in Purgatory.

With respect to Manuel Atienza's eyes, no one could deny that he saw, but no one would have dared to assert that he had ever looked one in the face.

With intelligent ignorance added to a monkey-like malice and the caution of a man advanced in years, he never permitted himself to gaze at his interlocutors, lest they discover the limitations of his knowledge. If his glance was held for a moment, it was so vague, so mistrustful, that it seemed as if those pupils gazed inward, or as if the man must have eyes behind his ears like the lizards. His mouth was like that of an old mastiff. His forehead disappeared under the encroachments of his hair, and his face shone like tanned leather. His voice, hoarse as the report of a blunderbuss, had certain harsh, brusque notes like the blows of the axe upon wood.

His dress was like that of the better class in those towns, and consisted of rude leather sandals, woollen stockings, short breeches and jacket of coarse dark cloth, a blue satin vest embroidered with yellow, a cartridge belt instead of a sash, and an enormous hat with a plush-covered brim. I will here add that his alcalde's staff was as high as his shoulder, and two black tassels, as big as oranges, testified that he was a man of authority. Such was the Alcalde of Lapeza, and all subordinates were under his rule. If you think the description exaggerated, remember that the race of *Lapezeños* has not degenerated with years. Go there, and you will be astounded as I was, that in Spain, in the middle of the 19th century, there should exist the wonders of Southern Africa.

III.

The work of fortification was finished and the arms distributed. Atienza had sent Jacinto, the constable, to his house for a very old drum that was used in processions and when proclamations were made.

"Fall in," shouted Sindico, a man well skilled in the art of warfare, as

he had served Carlos IV. in a company of huntsmen. The two hundred *Lapezeños* formed in line in front of the town hall.

Atienza grasped a large old sword with long cross-bars, thrust a pistol into his belt, and took his Alcalde's rod in his left hand like a marshal of France. Followed by his staff, composed of the town crier, the constable and the notary public, he reviewed his formidable hosts, who presented arms and then tossed their caps in the air.

"Long live the Señor Alcalde!" shouted those future heroes, to which Atienza replied: "It doesn't matter about the Alcalde. Long live God and Lapeza! Long live the Spanish independence!"

Having exchanged this warlike salute, his Excellency ordered Jacinto to play a quickstep, then he called the town crier to him, who repeated, very slowly, one by one, the words of the commander, the following proclamation—not written—

"Through the report of Uncle Piorno it has been learned that the enemy of the country is coming to-day to Lapeza to attack us and steal our possessions, but we, with the blessing of the priest and by the help of our patron saint, the Virgin of the Rosary, are going to defend ourselves like good Spaniards, and to show the town of Gaudix that if it has surrendered to the French, the men of Lapeza know how to die as the soldiers of Madrid died on the second of May, or to conquer as the soldiers of Bailen conquered two years ago, and therefore, the Alcalde wishes these men to know that he who does not die defending his honor will be declared an unworthy Spaniard—a traitor to his country—and he shall die as he deserves, hanged to an oak on the hillside."

"In testimony thereof, not knowing how to write, his Honor makes the usual cross, which the Notary will cer-

tify. Long live God! Long live the Virgin! Long live Fernando VII! Death to Pepe Botellas! Death to the French! Death to Godnot! Death to the traitors!"

This warlike proclamation produced an extraordinary effect upon the men of Lapeza. Manuel Atienza made the cross with his fingers and kissed it. The secretary nodded his head. The town crier complimented the Alcalde upon his extemporaneous discourse. Jacinto again beat the drum, and shouts, dancing and patriotic hymns ended the almost comic prologue of a veritable tragedy.

"Each one to his place!" exclaimed Sindico. Some of the men climbed upon the wooden fortress, others guarded the cannon, which was provided with a long fuse. The shepherds, more dexterous in the management of the sling, climbed the Moorish castle. The gunners started out boldly on the Gaudix road, while the Alcalde stationed himself upon a height that overlooked the future battlefield. Jacinto was by his side, so that by a quick beat on the drum, he might give the signal to fire.

In the meantime, the priest once more blessed and absolved his courageous parishioners, and then with the aid of the sacristan and gravedigger, he set about preparing bandages, holy oil and litters for the succor of the wounded and dying.

Nearly all the women were praying in the churches. As for the children, it had been arranged that morning to send all to the top of the Sierra Nevada, so that their lives would not be in danger, and that they might serve, in future years, to repel another foreign invasion.

At three o'clock a cloud of dust betrayed to the *Lapezeños* the proximity of the enemy. Shortly after came a few shots from the vanguard. The *Lapezeños* jumped with enthusiasm, and, at the same time, by the final or-

der of the Señor Alcalde, they raised two or three flags, made of black kerchiefs, upon the old Moorish castle and the oak parapet.

The bells rang loudly, the old women began to scream and the boys to whistle. Stones were thrown and musket shots were heard in the road. A moment later the men fell back towards the town, reloading their guns. The first helmets and bayonets of the invading force glittered within range of the blunderbusses.

"How many are coming?" asked Manuel Atienza of one of his men.

"There are two hundred," he responded.

"We have equal forces," exclaimed the charcoal-burner, with disdainful arrogance, regardless of the fact that two hundred poorly armed countrymen did not mean the same thing as two hundred veterans, skilled in warfare and provided with excellent arms.

"But they have cavalry," said a second gunner.

"I repeat we are equal," said Manuel Atienza. "Now, Jacinto, beat your drum. Spain! and at them! Long live the Virgin!"

Jacinto gave the desired signal, and a shower of stones and bullets fell upon the Frenchmen.

A moment later they returned fire, killing five *Lapezeños*.

"Stop firing!" shouted the Alcalde. "They are still far off. Let them come nearer. You know the cannon is kept for the last resort. Don't touch the fuse until I wave my hat. You, ladies, be quiet and take care of the wounded."

"They are coming again!"

"It's nothing—they are quiet."

"They are aiming."

"Lie down, everybody!"

A second discharge was fired against the oak trunks, and the French advanced within twenty paces of the opposing forces. The foot soldiers fell

back on each side of the road, leaving the cavalry to pass on.

"Fire!" exclaimed the Alcalde in a voice of thunder, as he waved his hat. He was exposed to the greatest danger.

Then what happened was horrible, inexpressible! Frenchmen and Spaniards fired at the same time, strewing the ground with corpses. The cavalry took advantage of this moment to approach the foot of the fortress, doubtless thinking they could easily destroy it.

Hundreds of stones were hurled down upon horses and riders, who began, on their part, to fight desperately. In the midst of that tumult and whirlwind of confusion, came the tremendous roar of the fearful cannonade, bringing death to besiegers and besieged. It seems that the cannon had burst as it was fired, and the oak trunk, rent in fragments, scattered the shot in all directions, in front, behind and on both sides. The explosion of so much powder had displaced the tree trunks upon which the cannon rested. These trunks fell and crushed Spaniards and Frenchmen together. There was a chaos of smoke, powder, groans, lamentations, shouts, flames and blood. There were dismembered corpses whose limbs were blown through the air and fell to earth with the balls, stones and other projectiles. Struggling, kicking horses tried to escape. The men of Lapeza who were still on foot, struck blindly at friends or foes with their daggers, while from above came showers of bullets and stones. It was as if the end of the world had come.

In the midst of this tempest, in this Inferno, while the French cornet played the retreat, and the drum of Lapeza beat the general call to arms, the invincible Alcalde, the unconquerable Atienza could be heard shouting frantically: "Give it to them, boys! Don't leave one! There can't be many left now!"

That was true enough, but it was also true that there were fewer Spaniards. The oak cannon had destroyed more Spaniards than Frenchmen, nevertheless, as the latter were ignorant of the means of defence that those "demons" still had in reserve, and were also ignorant of their number, besides being terrified by them, they thought only of saving themselves and beat a hasty retreat. The cavalry was mixed with the infantry—all was disorder. The soldiers, heedless of their officers' commands, attempted a retreat that greatly resembled a flight. They were pursued by those shepherds who still had ammunition for their slings and the gunners who possessed cartridges.

The conquerors of Egypt, Italy and Germany entered Gaudix that night at eight o'clock, having left one hundred comrades in Lapeza and on the road. They were wounded by stones and bullets, blackened by powder and covered with blood and sweat. That day an inferior force of shepherds and charcoal-burners had beaten them.

IV.

A fearful epilogue followed the drama to which we have just referred.

Imagine the surprise and wrath of General Godinot when he learned what had happened in Lapeza.

"I shall not leave one stone upon another!" exclaimed the revengeful Gaul.

Four days later, two thousand, four hundred men started for Atienza's town under the command of a general, and with provisions and ammunition enough to besiege a fortified town.

That large army came in sight of Lapeza at nine o'clock in the morning. No one was to be seen in the road, not a shot was fired, not a stone thrown. All was silence and solitude in the deserted city. The fortress of old trunks had not been rebuilt, and the church bells gave no signal of the enemy's ap-

proach. Thus the infuriated invaders entered the town. It may have seemed to them a sort of prophecy. Lapeza was not more deserted than was Moscow when entered by Napoleon the Great.

Even the wolves, surfeited with plunder, had returned to their lairs in the hills. Only a few women, who had come down that day to their abandoned homes in search of food, were found in the church where they had sought shelter, believing that the illustrious conquerors would respect the sanctuary.

But, no! Instead of strong men to conquer, the fortune of war had given them virtuous wives and innocent maidens to scoff at and maltreat. Let us not dwell on those infamies, so many times repeated by the European conquerors during their rule in Spain. Malediction upon those who added crime to victory!

Pleased and satisfied with themselves, these heroes were returning to Gaudix, carrying with them as their only prisoners a feeble old man, whom they had found in a hut, and a young boy who was attending him. Suddenly, there rushed down the mountain-side, like a precipitous torrent, the infuriated fathers, brothers and lovers, who had just learned, from an escaping fugitive, of the horrors committed.

Then began a tremendous conflict between the hundred men still under Atienza's orders and the twenty-four hundred French soldiers. Having made the challenge and started the fight, the men of Lapeza began to beat a retreat, hoping that the enemy would follow them into the dense forests of the mountain.

The Frenchmen were imprudent enough to fall into the trap, and, although it is true that their terrible arms almost annihilated that handful of men, they paid for each life with ten of their own men.

The crags, the ravines and woods were strewn with French corpses. It was one of those skirmishes of the French army of which little is really known, and where the losses were not counted in the list of great battles, but which gave, at the end of the war of Independence, the enormous total of half a million imperial soldiers lost or dead in our peninsula.

Let us finish. Atienza, the invincible charcoal-burner, who had fought two battles in four days with Bonaparte's troops, stood on a high cliff surrounded by the French. He was lost! He loaded his blunderbuss with the last bullet. His head was bandaged, and he was covered with blood from a recent wound in the chest, but he still wore his judicial staff thrust through his belt like a muleteer. He responded to the suggestions of the French that he should surrender with outbursts of savage laughter that echoed far over the mountains. Bullets whistled around him, but he dodged them, jumping from one side to the other, leaping up, crouching down. Agile, swift, elastic as a tiger in his ceaseless movements, he inspired terror in his resistance as well as in his attack. He had fired his last shot when a ball struck him in the abdomen. A deep groan escaped his lips. He knew he was about to die. He threw away his blunderbuss, not without a look of anger at its uselessness, drew the long staff from his belt and said to a French colonel, who was urging him, in very bad Spanish, to surrender: "I will not surrender! I am the town of Lapeza. I will die rather than yield it!"

Breaking his staff, he tossed the pieces into the Frenchmen's faces. Then he threw himself backward and was dashed against the rocks of a deep ravine.

The enemy never obtained possession of his body.

Pedro Antonio de Alarçon.

THE FLOOR OF THE SEA.

Who is there among us that has ever seen a lake, a pond, or a river-bed laid dry that has not felt an almost childish interest and curiosity in the aspect of a portion of earth's surface hitherto concealed from our gaze? The feeling is probably universal, arising from the natural desire to penetrate the unknown, and also from a primitive anxiety to know what sort of an abode the inhabitants of the water possess, since we almost always consider the water-folk to live as do the birds, really on land with the water for an atmosphere. But if this curiosity be so general with regard to the petty depths mentioned above, how greatly is it increased in respect of the recesses of the sea. For there is truly the great unknown, the undiscoverable country of which, in spite of the constant efforts of deep-sea expeditions, we know next to nothing. Here imagination may (and does) run riot, attempting the impossible task of reproducing to our minds the state of things in the lightless, silent depths, where life, according to our ideas of it, is impossible,—the true valley of the shadow of death.

Suppose that it were possible for some convulsion of Nature to lay bare, let us say, the entire bed of the North Atlantic Ocean. With one bound the fancy leaps at the prospect of a rediscovery of the lost continent, the fabled Atlantis whose wonders have had so powerful an effect upon the imaginations of mankind. Should we be able to roam through those stupendous halls, climb those towering temple heights reared by the giants of an elder world, or gaze with stupefied wonder upon the majestic ruins of cities to which Babylon or Palmyra with all their mountainous edifices were but as a suburban townlet? Who knows? Yet

maybe the natural wonders apparent in the foundations of such soaring masses as the Azores, the Cape Verde Island, or the Canaries; or, greater still, the altitude of such remote and lonely pinnacles as those of the St. Paul's Rocks, would strike us as more marvelous yet. To thread the cool intricacies of the "still vext Bermoothes" at their besements and seek out their caves where the sea-monsters dwell who never saw the light of day, to wander at will among the windings of that strange maze of reefs that cramp up the outpouring of the beneficent Gulf Stream and make it issue from its source with that turbulent energy that carries it, laden with blessings, to our shores; what a pilgrimage that would be! Imagine the vision of that great chain of islands, which we call the West Indies, soaring up from the vast plain 6,000 feet below, with all the diversity of form and color belonging to the lovely homes of the coral insects, who build ceaselessly for themselves, yet all unconsciously rear stable abodes for mankind.

It would be an awful country to view, this suddenly exposed floor of the sea. A barren land of weird outline, of almost unimaginable complexity of contour, but without any beauty such as is bestowed upon the dry earth by the kindly sun. For its beauty depends upon the sea, whose prolific waters are peopled with life so abundantly that even the teeming earth is barren as compared with the ocean. But at its greatest depths all the researches that man has been able to prosecute go to prove that there is little life. The most that goes on there is the steady accumulation of the dead husks of once living organisms settling slowly down to form who knows what new granites,

marbles, porphyries, against the time when another race on a reorganized earth shall need them. Here there is nothing fanciful, for if we know anything at all of prehistoric times, it is that what is now high land, not to say merely dry land, was once lying cold and dormant at the bottom of the sea, being prepared throughout, who can say what unrealizable periods of time, for the use and enjoyment of its present lords. Not until we leave the rayless gloom, the incalculable pressures, and universal cold of those tremendous depths do we find the sea-floor beginning to abound with life. It may even be doubted whether anything of man's handiwork, such as there is about a ship foundering in mid-ocean, would ever reach, in a recognizable form, the bottom of the sea at a depth of more than 2,000 fathoms. There is an idea, popularly current among seafarers, that sunken ships in the deep sea only go down a certain distance, no matter what their build, or how ponderous their cargo. Having reached a certain stratum, they then drift about, slowly disintegrating, derelicts of the depths, swarming with strange denizens, the shadowy fleets of the lost and loved and mourned. In time, of course, as the great solvent gets in its work they disappear, becoming part of their surroundings, but not for hundreds of years, during which they pass and re-pass at the will of the undercurrents that everywhere keep the whole body of water in the ocean from becoming stagnant and death-dealing to adjacent shores. A weird fancy, truly, but surely not more strange than the silent depths about which it is formulated.

In his marvelously penetrative way, Kipling has touched this theme while singing the "Song of the English:"—

The wrecks dissolve above us; their
dust drops down from afar—

Down to the dark, the utter dark,
where the blind white sea-snakes
are.

There is no sound, no echo of sound, in
the deserts of the deep,
On the great gray level plains of ooze
where the shell-burred cables
creep.

Here in the womb of the world—here
on the tie-ribs of earth,
Words, and the words of men, flicker
and flutter and beat—
Warning, sorrow and gain, salutation
and mirth—
For a Power troubles the Still that has
neither voice nor feet.

Surely the imagination must be dead indeed that does not throb responsive to the thought of that latter-day workmanship of wire and rubber descending at the will of man into the vast void, and running its direct course over mountain ranges, across sudden abysses of lower depth, through the turbulence of up-bursting submarine torrents, where long-pent-up rivers compel the superincumbent ocean to admit their saltless waters; until from continent to continent the connection is made, and man holds converse with man at his ease, as though distance were not. Recent investigations go to prove that chief among the causes that make for destruction of those communicating cables are the upheavals of lost rivers. In spite of the protection that scientific invention has provided for the central core of conducting wire, these irresistible outbursts of undersea torrents rend and destroy it, causing endless labor of replacement by the never-resting cable-ships. But this is only one of the many deeply interesting features of oceanography, a science of comparatively recent growth, but full of gigantic possibilities for the future knowledge of this planet. The researches of the Challenger expedition, embodied in fifty portly volumes, afford a vast mass of material for discussion, and yet it is evident that what they

reveal is but the merest tentative dipping into the great mysterious land that lies hidden far below the level surface of the inscrutable sea.

That veteran man of science, Sir John Murray, has in a recent paper (Royal Geographical Society's Journal, October) published his presidential address to the geographical section of the British Association at Dover, and even to the ordinary non-scientific reader his wonderful *résumé* of what has been done in the way of exploring the ocean's depths must be as entrancing as a fairy tale. The mere mention of such a chasm as that existing in the South Pacific, between the Kermadecs and the Friendly Islands, where a depth of 5,155 fathoms, or 530 feet more than five geographical miles, has been found, strikes the lay mind with awe. Mount Everest, that stupendous Himalayan peak, whose summit soars far above the utmost efforts of even the most devoted mountaineers, a virgin fastness mocking man's soaring ambition, if sunk in the ocean at the spot just mentioned would disappear, until its highest point was 2,000 feet below the surface. Yet, out of that abyss rises the volcanic mass of Sunday Island in the Kermadecs, whose crater is probably 2,000 feet above the sea level. But in no less than forty-three areas visited by the Challenger, depths of over 3,000 fathoms have been found, and their total area is estimated at 7,152,000 square miles, or about 7 per cent. of the total water-surface of the globe. Within these deeps are found many lower deeps, strangely enough generally in comparatively close proximity to land, such as the Tuscarora Deep, near Japan, one in the Banda Sea, that is to say, in the heart of the East India Archipelago, etc. Down,

down into these mysterious waters the ingenious sounding machine runs, taking its four miles and upwards of planoforte wire, until the sudden stoppage of the swift descent marks the dial on deck with the exact number of fathoms reached. And yet so vast is the ocean bed that none can say with any certainty that far greater depths may not yet be found than any that have hitherto been recorded, amazing as they are.

The character of the ocean floor at all these vast depths, as revealed by the sounding tube bringing specimens to the surface is identical—red clay—which strikes the fancy queerly as being, according to most ancient legends, the substance out of which our first ancestor was builded, and from whence he derived his name. Mingled with this primordial ooze is found the débris of once living forms, many of them of extinct species, or species, at any rate, that have never come under modern man's observation except as fossils. The whole story, however, demands far more space than can here be allowed, but one more instance must be given of the wonders of the sea-bed in conclusion. Let a violent storm displace any considerable body of warm surface water, and lo! to take its place, up rises an equal volume of cold under layers that have been resting far below the influence of the sun. Like a pestilential miasma these chill waves seize upon the myriads of the sea-folk and they die. The tale of death is incalculable, but one example is mentioned by Sir John Murray of a case of this kind off the eastern coast of North America, in the spring of 1882, when a layer of dead fish and other marine animals, six feet in thickness, was believed to cover the ocean floor for many miles.

The Spectator.

F. T. Bullen.

FOR EVER.

"My man," was said of her husband by Mrs. Belliver with the emphasis of a lofty pride. As a delicate girl, with physical trouble the occupation of her days and thoughts, she had been solaced by her mother: "Bide a bit, my dear. Thee shall 'ev a Man when thee gits married." And in five years of matrimony Mrs. Belliver had accounted them the words of prophecy. She believed in the prophetic, finding symbols in nature and omens in daily happenings. Joe Belliver realized the promised condition every time she looked up blushing to the ruddy face at a height above her.

The husband she had taken represented strength; she worshipped the exuberant health in him. Dimly perceiving marriage to be a state of compromise or a state of war, Joe Belliver compromised. In his essence he was nature's devotee and observer, riding his thirty miles a day on a stiff Dartmoor pony, and knowing all the secrets the moor had to give him, where Nature worked in broad tones and with large effects. His communion with the great silence, where he was but a sentient speck, bred a contempt for prophecy and omen, an impatience of small disputes.

He never went to the little chapel at Badleigh Bridge from choice, but always in pursuance of his theory of compromise. For five years he had spent Sunday in the singing of hymns, and in the digestion of sermons made long to each other by the brethren of the scattered community, and marveled at the strange light these ceremonies awoke in his wife's face and the tears they drew from her eyes. It was mysterious to him that these results were born of a meagre room with white-washed walls, and of a few sing-

ing voices overborne by an harmonium. He gazed into the great purple distances as they walked home by the rough track along the river, marveling the more, but not discontent, that she clung closer to him as they walked.

"I veel the blessing, Joe," she might say. "The Lord's above us, an' 'Eaven's ev'rywhere."

All his response would be a closer pressure of the arm.

"Do 'e veel the blessin' yersel', Joe? Zometimes I vancy you dawn't."

"'Tis a blessin' to 'ev a li'l 'ooman like you be, Minnie."

Joe vaguely comprehended her sigh, without understanding.

Until five years of such Sunday rites had passed, Joe had never felt his rebellion against usages rising up over his love for his wife. Then it was following a Saturday of full life, when, at Newcombe, he had feasted on the occasion of the October ale, and had his fill of the material, laughing earth, and, riding home against a red sunset, had imagined the world in hilarity, according with his mood. A virile man was he, rousing his wife from megrims, even to her own rare laughter, on his return, and causing in her a temporary abandonment to the ideal of gaiety and strength, and all the human forces.

Whether through remembrance as a sunlit cloud, or mere joy in living, such as Joe Belliver felt when he trod the dew in the morning, he began his Sunday a gleeful man, singing, smartened himself into a Sabbath appearance, and set out well satisfied with earth and being, for the day's pilgrimage to Badleigh Bridge. The moor was all a gorgeous sweep of color in its Fall purple. The sky was a barometer to him, and he now forecast a heavy rain in the

West which would not reach them. He endured the harmonium with complacency at the morning service, and was a welcome guest at a new-take dinner-table. The day waxed and waned gloriously and comfortably. Evening came, and the service in the little chapel was illuminated by fleeting candles in tin sconces. Then by some chance a fervor seized upon the people, awakened by the passionate tones of the brother who led them and his burning words. The white walls echoed their cries and groans. Joe Belliver sat amazed watching. The preacher had long left his exhortations; the spirit of the meeting was inarticulate. He came down from his platform, and walked among the benches speaking in the ears of kneeling, sobbing people. The light Joe Belliver did not understand flooded the place, and shone through the streaming tears of his wife at his side. The preacher came to her and whispered.

"Oh, iss," she gasped. "I veel the blessin', praise the Lord!"

To the question he put to Joe a simple lie might have been returned, but Joe did not return it.

"Brother, brother!" said the preacher, pressing his arm. And he went back to the platform and prayed aloud for a brother who had not felt the saving grace, and commanded the prayers of all. Some eyes, turned towards him, saw the deep flush under Joe's brown skin before he bent his head and covered his face. As they broke up he said no word, but walked straight through the group at the door, with his wife hanging to his arm. He looked neither left nor right. Mrs. Belliver had faint knowledge of the battle that raged in him as they took the river path under the increasing night.

"Joe, Joe! You be strange," she said. He strode along. He could formulate no expression of the offence against his dignity. He looked around,

appealing to the hills rising on both sides of the swift-running stream.

"Joe, Joe! What 'ev I done?" To this he could respond with "Nothin'." for hers was not the offence; but he said only the single word and held himself upright.

"Joe, you never bin like this avore, since us was married. Joe! Spalk to me."

"Iss,—'tidden you, Minnie. But I dawn't like vor to be made a vool of, 'vore a passle of vokes."

"Eh, Joe! My Man! To think 'pon thee bein' made any sich thing! Awn'y, the Lord move' Brother Dean. An' the Lord was there, Joe. Oh, Joe, if awn'y thee could veel the Spirit—I sh'u'd be 'appier'n I be now."

"What's the use? What do it main? What's the good o' pertendin'? I reckon I bain't no wuss'n any o' mun. Why sh'u'd mun cry out' pon me?"

"Joe—'tidden no pertendin'. 'Tis real, real! 'Ev vaith, an' belave, Joe, an' you'd veel the blessin', precious, precious!"

"I got a blessin' avore God an' man, in thee, Minnie. I do belave—in doin' my dooty, an' payin' my way, an' obeyin' the Ten Commandments. An' I dawn't like vor to be 'old up vor a shaw."

"Joe—my Man! But 'tidden all, Joe. There's Zummat beyon'—the life to come. You know I bain't the strongest. Supposin' that aught was to 'appen to me—w'u'd 'e like vor to think that was the end o't? . . . Oh, Joe!"

The cry struck his heart. He relaxed his uprightness. He gathered her in his arms. "Minnie, dawn't talk thicky way. What be zayin'?"

"Oh, I dun naw." She sobbed and reached up to kiss him. "You'm big an' strong, an' vull of life an' lustiness. You dawn't zee jus' what I zeas. 'Tis all awn'y vor a little while, Joe; an' I want vor to love 'e vorever, to 'ev 'e vorever, to 'old 'e vorever!"

He thrilled to her passionate words, and was melted, ready to run in any groove.

"Minnie, my dear! Thee can veel my arm aroun' 'e; thee knaw'st how I love thee."

"Iss, Joe. Oh, iss . . . But after, after!"

Clinging to him, she lost speech. They walked slowly on, with arms entwined. That night was a deep blue, with stars shining through into the narrow valley. And as they went, the river, rolling over the rocks to its unknown, seemed to endlessly repeat her cry. Spectator of the mystery of her exaltation in the solemn quiet of the moorland night, Joe Belliver was compelled. He was more in tune with the mood of the supernatural than had been possible in the heat and excitement of the little chapel. They had a closer communion of spirit than he had known; he was subdued and awed by a misty glimpse into vast spaces.

Within the familiar constraining walls of the riverside cottage, when he had lit their lamp and saw her moving about the kitchen in preparation of supper, his Ego became dominant again. He became the ineffably stronger, nourishing and protecting, and felt this consciousness when she nestled to him, sitting before the embers of a peat fire on the hearth. He was tolerant, considerate; he worked out in a fresh field the theory of compromise.

She left him with a kiss. He made secure outside the house, and stood in the doorway, looking upon the dim shadowy hills, and the faint sheen of the water. The stillness had given place to a cold, rushing breeze, north-westerly, along the river's course. Upwards the sky was opaque with clouds, a shimmer of lightning breaking through them. The river sang with a low moaning. He decided that long boots would be essential to him on the

morrow, and before he went to bed he placed them ready.

He found her on her knees by the bedside. He heard her saying low, "Forever! Forever!"

The night drew down upon the valley an intense blackness. The singing of the river grew louder; the cold breeze rattled among the few pines behind the house. The shimmer of lightning became a glare. A roll as of distant drums was added to the river's music. Rain pattered on the heather, and shone in the white flashing light. The storm marched, slow and majestic, over the moor, rattled among the crags of Black Tor, and advanced, ever following the river's course.

It fell upon the house of sleep. The thunder crashed and echoed from hill to hill; the lightning hovered about the thatch. It struck one of the meagre pines, and brought it down, stripped and smouldering, to the ground. It lit the lonely moor, and split and tore the clouds above; it pierced the blinds of the upper room, and filled it with a fierce, blue light. A crack that seemed to be tumbling the walls of the house about him woke the sound sleeper, Joe Belliver. His eyes dazed by the brilliant light, he stretched out his arms to his wife, and clasped air. He leaped up. She was not beside him. The open door admitted the cold breeze and the under-sound, beneath the thunder, of rain hissing into the river. From the stairs he saw in the kitchen doorway a white figure, arms raised.

"Minnie!" he called.

She did not hear but ran out into the day of night, with her hair streaming in the wind, still raising her hands to the heavens where they opened and the unearthly light blazed through. It was but a few yards to the brink of the river, now risen high by the flood-water from the west.

He was close to her as she stepped over and fell, and was whirled down-

ward by the frothing torrent. No cry of his was heard above the turmoil of the storm. His mighty jump took him into the water at her side. He clasped her and fought the stream with the burden in his arms. One chance of the struggle took him to the bank, but he caught nothing save grass, uprooted it, went spinning on. Fatigue succeeded a few lurid moments of raging desire

The Speaker.

for life. And then the river became a couch of down with a celestial light playing softly upon it and all sounds deadened save its slumber song, "But after, and after!"

They came to rest at the shingle bed at Badleigh Bridge, and a gentle morning was smiling on their close embrace when the first peat-cutter passed that solitary way.

R. A. J. Walling.

VENETIAN GLAMOR.

Like her great masters, even to-day in her trance-like decline, Venice remains superbly sensuous. Venice courts and holds your eye—but your soul she leaves untouched, your heart barely moved. Her loveliness is the splendor of the world lifted to the heights of an earthly paradise. This has ever been the triumphant quality of Venetian charm; the secret and significance of "the revel of the earth, the masque of Italy." Venice will offer you every grace of the flesh, but not a hint of spirituality, not a suggestion of suffering, without which it is impossible to conceive a city as the home of humanity. There may be suffering in Venice, but its presence is never felt. The town mocks at suffering with the insolence of a courtesan, whose air of sadness and forsakenness she wears in decay. Shorn of pomp, bereft of glory, shattered in her pride, she mourns but memories of pleasures, of passion and its triumphs. An abject goddess, she has a face for every hour of musing, for still she subsists on admiration and, ephemeral though it be, for its sake will gladly respond to every passing mood of the traveller.

Note how wan and gray she will look upon a moist and clouded morning.

Sullen sky above, the Lagoon an interminable slate, flat, almost purple, over which the gondolas glide as upon solid earth. The curious crooked little streets are dim; dark and forbidding the winding canals; and without the silken sheen of its garment of sunlight the beautiful Piazza is but a colonnaded state salon, as cold and empty as a museum, abandoned even by its habitual hosts, the pigeons. A more chill and deserted picture you could not ask to see. Noth that it has lost its beauty; but with the light gone its witchery and gaiety have vanished. And perhaps an hour later the golden light will be blazing over the golden church, flashing across the magnificence of the Doges' palace. Where will you match such a quick and vivid return of radiance, such a superb assertion of indifference to the stains and marks of centuries and events?

Turn then to the ever-shifting pictures of the Lagoon, so different from the life of the dark narrow canals which flow into the Lagoons under the myriad little bridges of Venice. It is ever the eye that is caught, to the senses is the appeal. The mysterious enchantment of this wide waste of wa-

ter in front, variable as the skies above, showing every mood of gaiety and gloom, now brilliant, now colorless, now still as glass, or troubled and foam-flecked as the sea!

The charm of those countless isles, green stains between the azure of sky and the opaline blue of the Lagoon! Watch them at sunset, when their thin shore-lines seem to recede and fade behind a powdered glory, as though the sun let down from the flaming heavens a veil of golden dust shot with scarlet. Through the glow of this veil the lovely Salute and San Giorgio are revealed, the one suffused with color, the Salute warm in its darkness of worn stone, its golden ball a globe of concentrated light. And as you watch, even in that short spell, the changing waters will offer you a hundred surprises. Like the opal they blush and pale, blue shadows ripple into silver spaces, a trail of glory flashes wavering over the broad field of pearly green. And as the cool dusk descends and cunningly blends the whole scene in the enlarging and beneficent twilight, you see the lights along the splendid curve of the Giudecca, with its melancholy deserted quay, start out upon the dimness, in all the glitter of jewels, now deep and blood-red as rubies, now with the hard crude flash of white diamonds or yellow as the topaz. All the colors of the Lagoon have faded away, and the quiet of the waters shows as in a mirror the "stars which are the poetry of heaven." The swift gondolas cut across the silver plain, casting long, black shadows of boat, of man, of slowly moving oar. The clouds send flakes of indigo over the shining surface, and in the fluid atmosphere islands and the buildings of the shorelines become the most delicate of etchings. A starlit blue plain above, with a pale, gold crescent tipping the campanile and emphasizing its elegance. A blue-shadowed starlit plain beneath, with gon-

dolas, barges and steamers sketched upon it in ink. Afar the islands of the Lagoon are masses of denser and deeper shadow. The scene is permeated with an indescribable and exquisite sadness. When the black gondolas go by with their black-covered, coffin-shaped cabins, the sense of sadness becomes nigh unbearable. The aspect is lugubrious as that of a catafalque, and explains, along with the sad dark canals and the mournful lagoons, the dislike, amounting to horror, which Venice inspires in some breasts.

But the charm of the Grand Canal, that fluid serpentine road with its long lines of palaces, can never pall on you. You cannot tire of watching the backward and forward glide of the gondolas, with the light upon the saw-shaped steel prows, and sometimes a bright sash marking the waist of the figure upon the poop in high relief against the sky. So with the luxurious movement—say rather negation of movement—of the gondola. It is a unique sensation that thrills through you with a sigh of supreme physical delight. It is Mohammed's heaven. You think of hours and faint sensual music and murmured speech, wherein the soul plays no part whatever. In Venice you begin to forget your soul. You want but a palace and a gondola, and to live pleasantly without any thought of anything beyond.

You will live most pleasantly by the quay of the Zattere, where Ruskin wrote his "Stones of Venice," and the sunset views are finest, fronted as you are by the immense sweep of the silent Giudecca with its long empty quay. Here you breathe an incomparable quiet, and the beauty about you is of a less flaunting, a less seductive and seizing quality, you are away from the constant temptation of those mysterious little bridges, from the glittering and wondrous Piazza; the great changing Lagoon lies further down beyond

S. Giorgio, and you have nothing to distract you but the loveliness of the venetian sky and the wide gray canal.

Boats glide slowly by with fruit and vegetables and eggs piled in great hills in an inexplicable and artistic security; the rower behind his wares as careless and as sure as if he had no catastrophe to fear in the way of collision. The dexterity of these gondollers is an eternal surprise. How their boats shave one another, how easily and gracefully they drift under the low bridges, and never a hurried movement, never a quickening of the slowly turning oar. The gondoller might well prove more picturesque, more romantic, would he show himself in a garb more befitting his renown. He is a very excellent fellow, if not entirely blameless, but as a picture he leaves something to be desired. In holiday attire, however,

The Saturday Review.

he looks astonishingly smart. If you hire him by the season he will don spotless linen and adorn himself with a red or blue sash, a flowing necktie to match, and a band of red or blue round his straw hat. He is mighty proud of these accoutrements, and looks scornfully at his battered colleagues in ordinary disarray. Towards evening the view upon a side canal affords many a quaint pleasure than the cheap serenades beyond S. Mark's. Workmen in large barges pass under the little bridge and glide along the dim water, singing delightfully on their mystic way. The subdued voices gather and weave a grave and delicate harmony, and, in a town void of the noise of traffic, carry back with wondrous volume and clearness long after the barges have disappeared.

SORROW AND SONG.

"Give me the gift of Song," one asked of Fate,
"That I may sing of beauty and of Spring;
Of woodland glades where streams are murmuring;
Of snow-topped mountains, lone and desolate;
Of Love and Sorrow, of Revenge and Hate."
Saith Fate: "That gift be thine, but it shall bring
Sorrow. Each note of gladness thou shalt sing
Unto thy heart's deep anguish shall vibrate."

"Be mine the power," he said, "and mine each pang
That is the guerdon of the Poet's song."
So in the market-place the whole day long
Amid his busy fellow-men he sang,
And none who heard him, guessed that each sweet strain
Had wrung the singer's heart with mortal pain.

The Spectator.

Beatrice J. Prall.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

Miss Edith Henrietta Fowler, hitherto known only as a writer of stories of child-life, has written a novel entitled, "A Corner of the West," which has Devonshire scenery for its setting.

American historical novels of good quality find an instant welcome. Witness Mr. Ford's "Janice Meredith," the publishers of which, Dodd, Mead & Co., report a sale of sixty thousand copies in the first three weeks after publication.

Ill health has compelled Count Tolstoy to defer the publication of Part III. of his "Resurrection," and there will be a corresponding delay in the appearance of the complete novel in book form. The authorized version will be published in this country by Dodd, Mead & Co.

The next volume to appear in the "Beacon Biographies" will be a sketch of Aaron Burr, written by Mr. Henry Childs Merwin, whom Atlantic readers will recall as the author of a series of striking articles on Tammany Hall.

A reproduction in fac-simile of the manuscript of Milton's minor poems is about to be published in England. It consists of forty-seven pages, mostly in Milton's own hand, and it includes the "Arcades," "Comus," "Lycidas," several of the Sonnets, and the first sketch of "Paradise Lost" as a drama.

A series of monographs on "Modern English Writers," projected by the Blackwoods, is to contain a volume on Browning by Augustine Birrell, one on Tennyson by Andrew Lang, and one on George Elliot by Sidney Lee, the biographer of Shakespeare. Thackeray

is to be treated by Charles Whibley, and Dickens by W. E. Henley. This is a highly promising series.

There are few persons to whom the friendship of a dog, either their own or their neighbor's, has not been accorded, and many such people will read with interest the story of one shaggy brown dog, whose name, "Bruno," gives the title to Byrd Spilman Dewey's little story. The dog's first introduction into the family, and his steadily growing loyalty and quickwittedness are pleasingly described. (Little, Brown & Co.)

No one will question that Mr. Kipling's remarkable story, "The Brushwood Boy," presents unusual opportunities for illustration; but it would require unusual gifts in an artist to make full use of them. Mr. Orson Lowell has undertaken the task, and there will be a good deal of curiosity to see the results, in a volume which the Doubleday & McClure Company are about to publish.

The housekeeper whose oilcloths will not wear well, and whose children's shoes universally insist upon creaking, will find a panacea for her woes in the handy and solidly packed little book of rules and remedies which the Funk & Wagnalls Co. publish. The author, Hervey J. Seaman, has gathered together in a small volume called "The Expert Cleaner," a great variety of material, and has arranged it with careful regard to the convenience of the seeker after remedies.

A leading London publisher says that his house does not accept one per cent of the novels submitted to it.

The difficulty in most cases is that the writers set themselves to deal with conditions of life of which they have no knowledge. The man of the lower middle class is determined to depict the ways of the aristocracy; or a woman who has led a quiet and sheltered life undertakes a military romance, and the publishers' reader does not have to pursue the work far before he finds it utterly unavailable.

A remedy for more than one species of morbidness might be found in Raymond L. Bridgman's book, "*The Master Idea*," which comes from the Pilgrim Press. Mr. Bridgman has a vigorous faith in the supreme beneficence of God's laws, and in the steadiness and merciful unchangingness of them, and he expresses it with vigor. For clear and helpful suggestions the book will be found both interesting and of worth in practical life.

It seems to be generally agreed that M. Zola's latest story, "*Fécondité*," is simply impossible in English. At all events, M. Zola's authorized English translator has given up the effort to render it in a form in which any English publisher would venture to issue it. No one will accuse the *Saturday Review* of prudishness, but that journal describes the book as shattering the reputation recently acquired by the author, and toppling him down from his pinnacle back into his old gutter.

Mr. F. W. Bourdillon's exquisite lyric, "*The Night has a Thousand Eyes*," than which there is nothing daintier in modern English verse, gives its name to a slender and prettily-illustrated volume of his poems, which Little, Brown & Co. publish. There are sixty or more bits of verse in the book, altogether, and the effect they produce upon the mind, as one reads them, is like that of a succession of bird-songs. Their note

is sweet and genuine, and Mr. Edmund H. Garrett's illustrations furnish a pretty decoration for them.

It is a satisfaction to find that the accumulation of distinctly missionary literature—or rather the literature of missions—is increasing from year to year. A new collection of short sketches on subjects connected with such work is Funk & Wagnalls' "*The Miracles of Missions*," by Arthur T. Piereson. Waifs of London and forlorn children of Uganda appeal here to one's sympathies, and many a deed of courage which could well bear more than one recording has a place in this comprehensive little book.

A book which cannot fail to be gratefully received is the new study of the Commandments, "*The Ten Words*," which the Rev. Charles Caverno, L.L.D., has written, and the Pilgrim Press published. Its aim is to treat the Commandments as the germs of great truths, and to indicate the outgrowths from each separate principle as it is briefly set forth in the commandment. The book is logical, high-minded and far-seeing. While it is readable to the point of absorption it conveys very many practical suggestions that are of direct and immediate value.

One of those auspicious titles which in themselves place a story far in the enchanted country is that of A. T. Quiller-Couch's "*The Ship of Stars*," which Charles Scribner's Sons publish. The hero of this wholly charming novel is the "boy of dreams," the "*Taffy*" to whom a lighthouse is a symbol quite as truly as a structure; and the exclamation of the lad's father, "Lord, make men as towers!" is the keynote of the whole romance. The development of the boy-dreamer into the man of vigorous action, whose dreams are capable of taking material shape in ways help-

ful to his fellow-men, is not only exquisite but powerful.

A genuine little Irishwoman is the heroine of Katherine Tynan's "The Dear Irish Girl," which A. C. McClurg & Co. publish. Her name is Biddy, and she lives in Dublin, where her father is a learned and much-loved professor, a man addicted to the microscope, and with far more knowledge of books than of girls. But pretty Biddy, with her bright ways, her warm heart, and her honest, intelligent mind, grows up as her father would have her do, and the account of this growing-up, with the love story that belongs so essentially to it, forms a tale that American girl readers will heartily enjoy.

A book which even the most uninitiated concert-goer will take delight in for the number and quality of its entertaining anecdotes is Thomas Ryan's "Recollections of an Old Musician," which E. P. Dutton & Co. publish. The wide range of material at the writer's disposal and his acquaintance with many celebrities musical and otherwise would alone insure a readable book; but the frank and genial style, its simplicity, and the evident kindness of the discriminations which it makes, render it of unusual interest. By those who have acquaintance with the musical world the more technical details—inside lights, such as are often thrown on rehearsals and first performances—will be appreciated, and many people will wish to keep the volume for reference as well as for pleasure.

Not merely those fortunate people whose tastes and opportunities lead them into the active open-air life of woods and mountains, but those who take only a contemplative pleasure in "all outdoors," will enjoy Dr. Henry Van Dyke's new book, "Fisherman's Luck," which the Scribners publish.

From "variations" on so entertaining a theme as "Talkability," to the suggestions that come to him beside his tiny "friendship fire," at the noontide hour of rest, Dr. Van Dyke gives always what is most bright, sincere and uplifting for the refreshing of his readers. To have such a book to dip into is next best to being in sight of brooks and hills oneself.

The value of a picture in arousing the higher ideals is recognized, but that the very spirit of making the picture, the methods which underlie its existence, may also be used in explaining the relations between the ideals awakened and the actual which hedges them about, is not often understood. In "Religio Pictoris" (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.), Helen Bigelow Merriman employs the phraseology of the artist for the helpful elucidation of high truths. She has written a book of rare sweetness and vigor, which, though understandable of all men, appeals with especial vividness to those who have even a slight knowledge of drawing, painting or modelling.

Not every man possesses the grace that enables him to be a "contemporary." A due measure of personal charm and dignity, a reserve exquisitely able to abide by its own discriminations, and an abounding friendliness and charity of soul are qualities essential to this high rôle. The men and women to whom Thomas Wentworth Higginson has been "contemporary," and who are enshrined in his volume, "Contemporaries," receive the full benefit of his peculiar fitness to render to them a tribute. Whether in speaking of Theodore Parker or Helen Jackson, of Wendell Phillips or General Grant, Mr. Higginson speaks with discernment, as well as a fine sympathy. (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.)

